Fare Change /Low Income Fare Public Outreach Report
Fall 2014

Overview:

In a response to King County Metro's recently adopted fare change for Spring 2015, which included a new low income fare, Sound Transit is considering fare change options for Board action and undertook a public comment period to examine potential fare change scenarios. The comment period launched in September 2014, with a series of five public meetings (and a Public Hearing) held in October. The public involvement process was designed to ensure members of the public, community groups and project stakeholders had the opportunity to learn and comment on the fare change options. The official comment period was September 19 through October 23. Public meetings were held during the weeks of October 6 and October 13.

As part of the Proposed Fare Change public involvement process, the outreach team employed a robust notification strategy to ensure the public was made aware of the opportunity to engage and provide formal feedback during the comment period. The following types of notification represent a broad combination of materials and notification vehicles to reach out to the community as a whole and invite feedback during the Proposed Fare Change comment period.

Comment Methods:

Sound Transit provided several methods for the public to submit their feedback and comments. Formal comments were gathered and are provided verbatim in Attachments B through F.

- **Email:** fares@soundtransit.org
- **Phone:** 1-866-940-4387
- **Mail:** Sound Transit | Attn: Brian Brooke | 401 S. Jackson St. | Seattle, WA 98104
- **Online:** Questionnaire/survey posted on the agency's website, accessed via www.soundtransit.org/farechange
- **At public meetings:** Comment form / printed survey available at Open Houses; comment form and verbal comments collected at public hearing
- **Foreign Language Line**: 1-800-823-9230
- **Accommodations for persons with disabilities:** 1-800-201-4900 / TTY Relay 711

Public Involvement:

Public outreach efforts to inform the community of the proposed fare change options and to solicit feedback from stakeholders and the public were extensive and included:

- Five public open houses in all Sound Transit subareas;
- A public hearing at Union Station in Seattle;
- Posting information about the project on the Sound Transit website; emailed updates to various agency subscription lists;
- Ensuring flyers were available at outreach events and activities within the four week comment period;

- Paid advertising publicizing the public meetings and opportunities to submit comment in multiple languages in seven local print publications, 17 online publications, and Sound Transit's social media channels;
- Paid official notices of public meetings in regional news publications;
- Individual contact with community groups and organizations offering staff presentations;
- Coach posters on all Sound Transit revenue fleet vehicles (Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, ST Express buses, Tacoma Link light rail);
- Presentations at three stakeholder group meetings, including two with translation services;
- Presentation to Sound Transit's Citizens' Accessibility Advisory Committee

Detailed Outreach Methods/Comment Period Notifications (by Date):

Date	Notice	Detail	Reach
Ongoing (starting mid-September)	**E-mail notifications and Briefings to Jurisdictions, Stakeholder Groups and Organizations**	Proposed fare changes were a component of major jurisdictional/ organizational briefings with key E.J. and stakeholder groups, including Sound Transit's Citizens' Accessibility Advisory Committee	
9/19	**Web listings and announcements**	Project web page on Sound Transit's website with link to online comment form (survey); Home page/Fares page announcements; Open House listings on main activity calendar	
9/19 (begins)	**Print and online display ads**	Regional and local papers, including publications to non-English speaking populations, for total of $10K approximate total budget. See display ad list for publications. Run throughout comment period.	7 print publications; 17 online publications (50% mainstream outreach and 50% Environmental Justice outreach)
9/23 (begins)	**Fact Sheet & Comment Form available at outreach events**	Project fact sheet and printed comment form were made available at all Customer Outreach and DECM Community Outreach events during comment period	various
9/19, 10/3, 10/17	**Weekly CEO Report Newsletter**	Blurbs in CEO Report e-mail concerning fare proposal, comment period and meeting schedule	2,500 subscribers (three times)
9/22 (begins)	**Coach posters**	Rider Notification: posters placed on Sounder/ST buses/Link to advertise fare proposal	Nearly 650 posters total, on all ST vehicles
9/22	**E-update to list-serve**	Rider Notification: Rider alert email distributed by Sound Transit via GovDelivery subscription service at launch of comment period. Timed with launch of comment period.	26,000 subscribers
9/22	**Press Release**	Distributed by Sound Transit using regular media protocol (MRPI), timed	175 local and regional media outlets; 6,125 public

Date	Notice	Detail	Reach
		with launch of comment period. Also sent out to News Release subscription list (general public).	subscribers
10/2 (begins)	**Sound Transit Facebook/Twitter**	Brief announcements of Proposed Fare Change comment period and public meetings through existing social channels. Running throughout comment period, likely two per channel.	*Twitter #1 (10/2 – 10/5):* 24K reach/260 clicks *Twitter #2 (10/7 – 10/10):* 30.6K reach/212 clicks *FB #1 (10/2 - 10/5)*: 5,605 reach/85 clicks *FB #2 (10/7 – 10/10):* 33,588 reach/355 clicks *FB #3 (10/20 – 10/23):* 61,280 reach/578 clicks
9/25 & 10/16	**Board meeting – CEO report**	At public Board and Committee meetings: CEO reports start of comment period concerning fare proposal; reminder about comment period and public meetings. Fact Sheet was also made available to the public at all Board and Committee meetings	General public in attendance; video archive of meeting posted online
10/3 (begins)	**CTR network**	Electronic notification to Commute Trip Reduction network	
10/9 & 10/17	**Legal notice/ electronic notice for public hearing**	Placed by Board Admin in Daily Journal of Commerce; electronic notice also went out to Board Meeting subscription list	2,170 subscribers
10/10 (begins)	**Regional Transit News/SIP Outreach**	"Ad" about Fare Change proposal in Regional Transit Newsletter as part of annual Service Implementation Plan outreach; email notice sent to Service Implementation Plan subscribers.	2,500 printed newsletters; 2,200 email subscribers
10/7 – 10/23	**Public Meetings: Open Houses & Public Hearing**	Series of five Open Houses throughout Sound Transit District, culminating in a Public Hearing on 10/23. King County Metro staff participated in the King County-based meetings.	
10/17	**Photo of the Week (online)**	Photo from Open House featured as "Photo of the Week" posted online and sent to subscription list	2,800 subscribers

Public outreach schedule:

- **Fri. Sept. 19**, Transit/Social Service stakeholders presentation, Santa Fe Room, 10:00-11:00 a.m., 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle

- **Tues. Sept. 23**, Citizens' Accessibility Advisory Committee, Sound Transit Board Room, 10:00-12:00 a.m., 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle

- **Tues. Oct. 7**, Public meeting at Everett Station, Weyerhaeuser Room, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 3201 Smith Ave., Everett

- **Wed. Oct. 8**, Public meeting at Meydenbauer Center, 5:30 7:30 p.m., 11100 N.E. 6th, Bellevue

- **Thurs. Oct. 9**, Public meeting at Korean Women's Association's Senior City, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 31635 23rd Ave. S, Federal Way

- **Tues. Oct. 14**, Public meeting at Freighthouse Square, Rainier Room, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 2501 East D St, Tacoma

- **Thurs. Oct. 16**, Presentation to Chinese Information and Service Center group (with Mandarin and Cantonese interpreters), 10:30-11:30 p.m., 4063 148th Ave NE, Bellevue

- **Thurs. Oct. 16**, Public meeting at King's Hall, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 2929 27th Ave. S, Seattle

- **Tues. Oct. 21**, Presentation to Chinese Information and Service Center group (with Mandarin and Cantonese interpreters), 1:30-2:30 p.m., 2821 Beacon Ave. S., Seattle

- **Thurs. Oct. 23,** Public hearing at Union Station, Noon-1 p.m., 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle

- **Thurs. Nov. 6**, Sound Transit Board Executive Committee, Sound Transit Board Room, 10:30-12:00 a.m., 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle

- **Thurs. Nov. 20**, Sound Transit Board, Sound Transit Board Room, 10:30-12:00 a.m., 401 S. Jackson St., Seattle

Response Volume:

Sound Transit provided several ways for members of the public to submit formal comment. In total, nearly 1000 people from across the three-county district participated in the engagement process. Additionally, a coalition of stakeholder groups submitted a formal letter outlining their position on the issue. Lastly, the Seattle Transit Blog submitted their online discussion on the issue as public comment. A detailed breakdown of response rates is as follows:

- 1 letter from stakeholder interest groups (see Attachment A)
- 14 email comments or questions (see Attachment B)
- 8 telephone calls (see Attachment C)
- 917 completed survey/feedback forms (both paper and online – see Attachments D & E)
- 2 Seattle Transit Blog discussions submitted as public feedback (see Attachment F)
- 11 verbal comments at Public Hearing (see Attachment G)
- 42 attendees at nine public meetings and stakeholder presentations

Summary of feedback:

The full survey report is included as Attachments D & E. Of the 917 completed surveys:

When asked if they agree or disagree with the statement "Sound Transit should implement a discounted fare for low-income adult riders":

- 36.9% strongly agree
- 16.5% somewhat agree

- 11% are neutral or have no opinion
- 11.5% somewhat disagree
- 24% strongly disagree

When asked if general fares should be raised to offset the revenue loss from a low-income discount:

- 14.4% strongly agree
- 17.9% somewhat agree
- 13.3% are neutral or have no opinion
- 15% somewhat disagree
- 39.4% strongly disagree

When asked on what services a low income discount plus general fare increase should be implemented if it were approved:

- 31.8% respond "none"
- 6.2% respond "Link light rail"
- 10.4% respond "Link light rail and ST Express in King County"
- 51.5% respond "all Sound Transit services"

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Attachment A: Letter from Transportation Choices Coalition

October 23, 2014

Brian Brooke
Sound Transit
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle WA 98104

Re: Sound Transit's low income fare proposal

Dear Mr. Brooke,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Sound Transit's low-income fare proposal. We are pleased to see Sound Transit take positive steps to make transit more affordable to current and new riders. We strongly support Sound Transit adopting a low-income fare similar to King County Metro, and implementing this fare in conjunction with Metro's efforts.

Based on these considerations, we make the following comments on Sound Transit's low-income fare and fare change proposal:

1. Sound Transit is in a unique position in that it serves King, Snohomish and Pierce County residents. From an equity standpoint, Option 4* is the strongest proposal because it will benefit riders in all three counties. We are cognizant of the implementation challenges associated with a multi-county approach but we urge the agency to consider a phased approach in implementing the reduced fare in all three counties. Doing so will harmonize fare structures across the region and make transit more accessible to all.

2. In the near term, we believe that Option 3*, which will create a reduced fare for Link and King County ST Express buses, is the best solution to achieve our goal to make King County transit access more affordable. It is important to have a fare policy that is consistent and does not create additional confusion.

3. We do not support Option 1* which will leave fares unchanged. In King County alone, approximately 25 percent of residents will be able to access a low-income fare. Given that King County Metro will adopt a low-income fare in March 2015, option 1 will leave residents of King County with a confusing, complicated and ultimately inequitable fare structure that will place an unfair burden on low-income riders.

4. We urge Sound Transit to commit resources to Metro's efforts to publicize and implement the Low-Income Fare program, and to ensure that eligible riders find it easy to use. A program of this scale will require significant outreach, innovative marketing and easy access. If we are to realize the promise of this fare policy, Sound Transit must make a strong effort to reach riders who will benefit from this reduced fare, not only with program information, but with access to ORCA cards and multiple means of adding value to those cards. We encourage Sound Transit to work in conjunction

All options exclude Tacoma Link light rail.

- **Option 1: No fare changes at this time.**
- **Option 2: Fare changes on Link light rail only. All Link fares increase by $0.25, except low-income adults pay $1.50.**
- **Option 3: Fare changes on Link light rail and King County ST Express bus trips. All Link fares and ST Express fares within King County increase by $0.25, except low-income adults pay $1.50.**
- **Option 4: Fare changes on all Sound Transit services. All Link, ST Express and Sounder fares increase by $0.25, except low-income adults pay $1.50 or youth fare, whichever is more.**

with Metro and with local organizations such as libraries, community colleges, and non-profit organizations that provide community health and human services to ensure robust adoption.

5. Sound Transit serves some of the most diverse communities in the region and its outreach and engagement for this program should reflect a multi cultural and linguistically diverse approach.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on these policies and look forward to working with Sound Transit to ensure that transit is accessible to all people in our community.

Sincerely,

African Diaspora of Washington

Diane Narasaki
Asian Counseling and Referral Services

Alma Kern
Filipino Community of Seattle

April Putney
Futurewise

Rich Stolz
OneAmerica

Rebecca Saldana
Puget Sound Sage

Rainier Beach Moving Forward

Alison Eisinger
Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness

Shefali Ranganathan
Transportation Choices Coalition

Attachment B: Comments received via e-mail

To whom it may concern,

I believe option 4 best serves the needs of the community. I would gladly pay 25 cents more to increase ridership.

In regards to those qualifying being issued a "special" ORCA card. hopefully it would not appear any different than a "regular" ORCA card.

Hello all-

This is my recommendation regarding the proposed fare changes.

Fares for SoundTransit Light Rail should be increased from SeaTac Airport & Tukwila to DT Seattle (Stadium, China-town, Pioneer Sq, Univ. St., Westlake). This would allow Sound Transit to remain competitive compared to taxis, Shuttle Express, and rental cars from the airport and compared to parking during game days while capturing the additional revenue from visitors and game patrons. The fare could be doubled to $5.00 from SeaTac Airport and the ridership for visitors would still remain at the current level.

This would also allow residents in the communities in between the above stations to pay the current fare and not see an increase. Many of these communities might not have the ability to afford a higher fare nor do they have another route/bus option to DT Seattle, especially on weekends.

Please take this into consideration before applying a blanket fare increase systemwide.

Hi,

I generally support the introduction of the low-income fare. I think it should be united with the disabled, senior and youth fares into a single "concession" fare. This would decrease fare complexity. Further, I think it should be tied to some percentage of the adult fare - perhaps 40 or 50% (but of course rounded to the nearest quarter).

Out of the options presented, I prefer option 4. There should be consistent user classes across the entire

Sound Transit fare structure. Further, serious work should be done to unite the fare structures across the entire ORCA area. Where agencies have competing services on the same routes (ie. Metro and ST Express), it makes no sense the fares are different (and that the difference varies by time of day, but that isn't your fault).

Thanks,

I oppose to general fare increase.

I am opposed to the fare increase. I commute from federal way to Lynnwood Monday through Friday. It costs me $10/day to get to my job because I have to take two buses. If costs increase I will be better off driving to work which will only put one more car on the road increasing traffic. I understand the need to be green which is why I spend almost 2 hours on the road every day. I will be forced to resort to other methods of transportation with an increase. Thanks

Anonymous, federal way.

Thank you for accepting public comments on the proposal to raise most fares and create a low-income fare.

The Seattle Transit Blog has had a couple posts on the proposal. I am providing the links here in order to enter the posts, and all the comments, into the record.

http://seattletransitblog.com/2014/09/22/sound-transit-to-consider-low-income-fare-and-25-cent-fare- increase/

http://seattletransitblog.com/2014/10/15/34-st-express-cash-fares-sound-transit-could-use-the-extra-

revenue/

Thanks, Brent
White

Contributing writer, Seattle Transit Blog

206-551-5144

Hello,

I understand you are considering changing the fare structure for one or more Sound Transit services. As someone who has commuted from Issaquah to Seattle via the Sound Transit Express for the last seven years, I have a vested interest in this proposed change. My company no longer subsidizes my ORCA card and even the $2.50 PugetPass for $90/mo is a strain on my finances. I would consider you raising the Sounder and Link prices to be the best option if you go ahead with the changed pricing.

Good Day.

I believe ST should align fares with Metro to simplify intra-agency travel.

However, I do not agree with hiking fares for the majority of regular Adult riders for the sake of the minority of riders.

ST must become more creative and progressive in the way it designs its fare structure. For example:

Eliminate zones and add peak fares: Currently it costs $2.50 to travel from Federal Way to Downtown, but it costs $3.50 to travel from Mountlake Terrace to the U-District. Likewise, it costs $3.50 from Tacoma to Federal Way, but $2.50 from Jackson Park to Issaquah.

Differentiate between cash fares and ORCA fares: This will encourage riders to get an ORCA card and speed up boarding.

I don`t want the fare increased becuase then i won`t be able to afford my pass.

Hello,

I recently read a post on the 510 bus asking for feedback on whether there should be an increase in bus fares to subsidize low income.

I fully do not support this initiative and would appreciate someone replying to this email so I know my opinion was heard.

I would be happy to dig into this matter in more detail if needed. My bases for this decision revolves around the facts that redistribution of income is not the answer, massive waste by our current state and federal government, and horrible accountability at all levels are much bigger issues and should be taken into account before your dept looks to sink its hands deeper into the pockets of the companies and individuals that pay to ride transit. I would prefer to drive but the political decision to push money into public transit vs. our freeways and roads have made driving in western Washington a disaster.

Thanks for posting the flyer on the bus, as I feel your openness to riders opinions is important in this matter. The higher the cost, the more likely I am to find other options on commute.

Hi ,

I think that the low income program would be great☺ that gives more people the chance to afford to get around because there are a lot of low income people in this area who would greatly benefit from this option of fare reduction to fit their needs. It make the population feel like they are considered and valued.

To whom it may concern,

As a citizen who opts to take public transit for a couple reasons I rigourously object to fare increases on express route.

Those of us just barely above the limits set for federal or state aid in many departments are being squeezed from all sides already. Increasing fares only compounds the problem and would make using public transit no longer affordable enough to continue to use it.

Those of us trying to make a living and who pride ourselves on not taking government aid for food, housing, utilities, medical etc. And trying not to burden the system further to allow those who truly are disabled to the extent that they can not support themselves, we cant afford to be squeezed anymore by raising costs.

There are most definitely other ways to find the revenue you seek. Cracking down on those who abuse the system, or making sustainable and alternative energies more affordable are just a couple ways to address this need.

Please do not force those of us who strive and work hard to play be the rules and not burden society to abandon using public transit because it is no longer advantageously affordable by raising fares even .25 cents.

Thank you for helping us stay independent and out of debt by allowing us to keep public transit as a viable means of transportation to our work places.

To whom it may concern,

I most recently viewed a public announcement attesting to proposed fare increases. In seeing this announcement I was compelled to cast my vote. I am a student that catches the 511/512 every single day round trip to my university. I also catch this route on weekends when traveling to work. Although the monies I pay toward a monthly ORCA pass are comparatively far less than what I would pay without the subsidy, I am barely able to afford it. I am sure that being socio-economically affluent acts as an important element in the average Americans transportation decisions; for I know that it has in mine. I am requesting that the fares remain the same if not decrease. Whilst I understand that Sound Transit is a for profit agency, I would argue that cross class accessibility is far more profitable on a macro analytic scale.

I thank you for your time in advance.

To whom it may concern,

I am a current transit rider. I have been disabled due to a long term illness. I would like to reiterate what I said at the meeting last Thursday about seeking an option that also meets and assists others like myself.

I agreed with the other gal who spoke, who said that there was not enough representation (or outreach) at your public forums to have their voices heard.

I think that to make a decision, one must consider all sides of the issue.

I have not read your strategies.. and I am not sure where to find them. to voice my opinion on which I would prefer.

Please consider heavily the outcome of your decisions on those who don't have a life and rely on public transit to try to have a reason to keep going.

I am grateful that I have been able to have this service. I hope that you will continue to give great service.

Thank you!

— END —

Attachment C: Comments received via telephone

- Supports raising fares to make public transit more viable. Asked if public meeting in Federal Way would be conducted in Korean or English.

- Customer is a RRFP holder. His monthly pass price will increase from $27 to $36 with King County Metro's fare increase and he would like to be able to take ST buses within King County using his monthly RRFP without paying an additional fee.

- Do not change fares, or if you have to change them, make it free for people who work and double the fare for people who don't work. Customer feels that he and others who work and contribute to the system shouldn't have to pay $0.25 more to make up for a lower fare for someone who is not working.

- Customer asked: How can you increase fares when you spend a million dollars on a TV ad that doesn't increase ridership at all? Customer stated that he was going to make posters and post them at transit centers and thinks Sound Transit mismanages funds.

- Customer saw ad for Public Hearing in Real Change Newspaper; inquired about location of October 23 hearing. I called the customer back and informed her of the Union Station address.

- Customer thinks that if Sound Transit changes fares, it should be for everyone without differentiating for income; everyone is low income these days. The fare should be the same for everyone, except senior and disabled riders.

- Customer does not think that disabled and elderly riders should be paying for low income people to have a discounted fare; thinks that most low income people get free transit passes already and believes that offering a low income fare is equivalent to other customers double-subsidizing the low income riders. Doesn't mind fares increasing if it pays for more service, but disagrees if they go up in order to discount fares for others. Doesn't want to subsidize Seattle and King County.

- Social service organization staff inquiring if we had any materials (general information and survey) regarding the fare change available in Chinese.

— END —

Attachment D: Survey Results (through Question #9). Total surveys received: 917

1. What zip code do you live in?

King County – 530

98001.....10	98032.....3	98075.....1	98119.....8
98002.....10	98033.....4	98077.....2	98121.....5
98003.....9	98034.....5	98092.....24	98122.....22
98004.....12	98038.....6	98101.....9	98125.....7
98005.....3	98042.....5	98102.....16	98126.....2
98006.....7	98045.....2	98103.....18	98133.....6
98007.....7	98047.....3	98104.....19	98136.....4
98008.....4	98052.....19	98105.....15	98144.....33
98010.....1	98053.....4	98106.....3	98146.....5
98011.....4	98055.....5	98107.....7	98155.....4
98022.....1	98056.....3	98108.....18	98166.....6
98023.....13	98057.....5	98109.....9	98168.....7
98027.....2	98058.....7	98110.....2	98177.....4
98028.....8	98059.....5	98111.....1	98178.....6
98029.....6	98070.....1	98112.....13	98188.....8
98030.....7	98072.....2	98117.....11	98198.....8
98031.....10	98074.....4	98118.....25	98199.....5

Pierce County – 192

98321.....8	98373.....5	98405.....11	98445.....4
98328.....2	98374.....16	98406.....4	98446.....2
98329.....2	98375.....6	98407.....2	98464.....1
98333.....1	98387.....9	98408.....3	98465.....1
98335.....1	98388.....1	98421.....1	98466.....4
98338.....4	98390.....15	98422.....4	98467.....3
98354.....2	98391.....20	98424.....3	98496.....1
98360.....11	98402.....5	98433.....1	98498.....3
98371.....11	98403.....2	98439.....1	98499.....4
98372.....8	98404.....5	98444.....5	

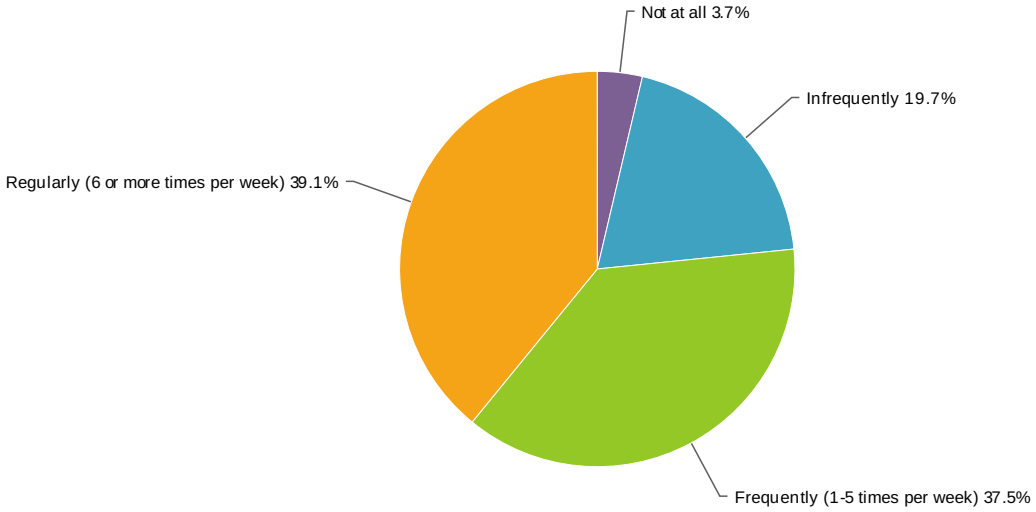
Snohomish County – 105

98012.....5	98043.....5	98223.....1
98020.....11	98087.....2	98252.....1
98021.....5	98201.....14	98258.....9
98026.....12	98203.....7	98270.....2
98036.....7	98204.....5	98271.....2
98037.....4	98208.....9	98296.....4

Other Counties – 19

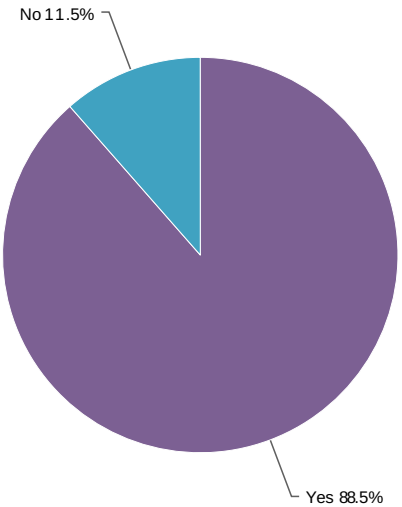
59801.....1	98346.....1	98503.....1
95011.....1	98359.....1	98513.....1
98240.....1	98366.....1	98516.....1
98260.....3	98501.....4	99208.....1
98284.....1	98502.....1	

2. On average, how many times per week do you ride Sound Transit?

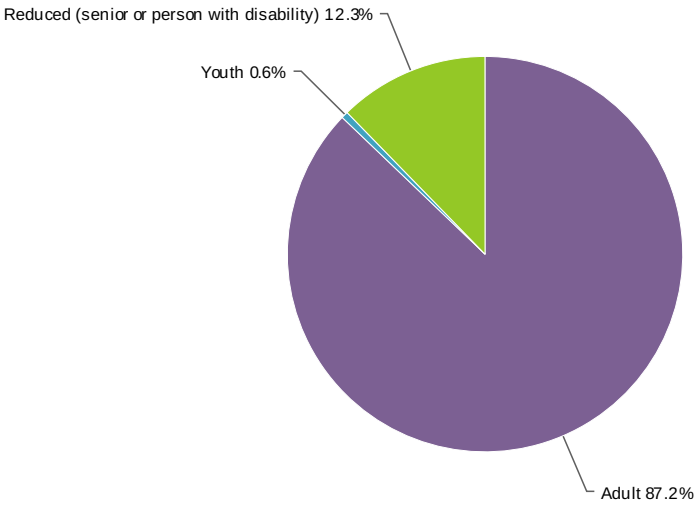


Not at all	3.7%		33
Infrequently	19.7%		177
Frequently (1-5 times per week)	37.5%		337
Regularly (6 or more times per week)	39.1%		351
		Total	898

3. Do you have an ORCA card?

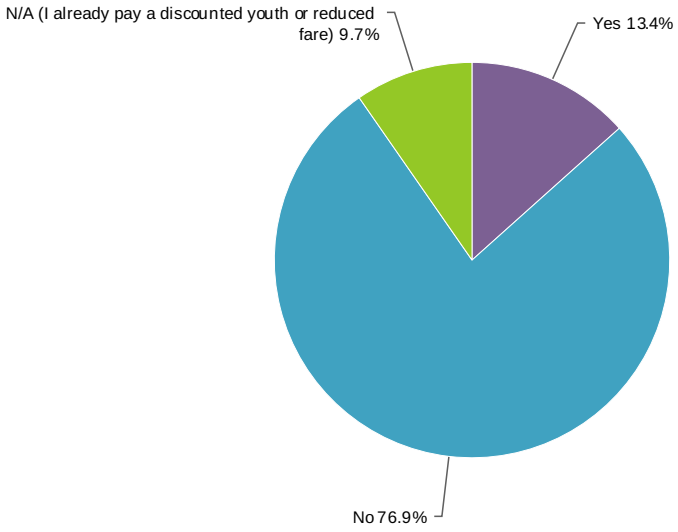


4. What fare payment category are you in?



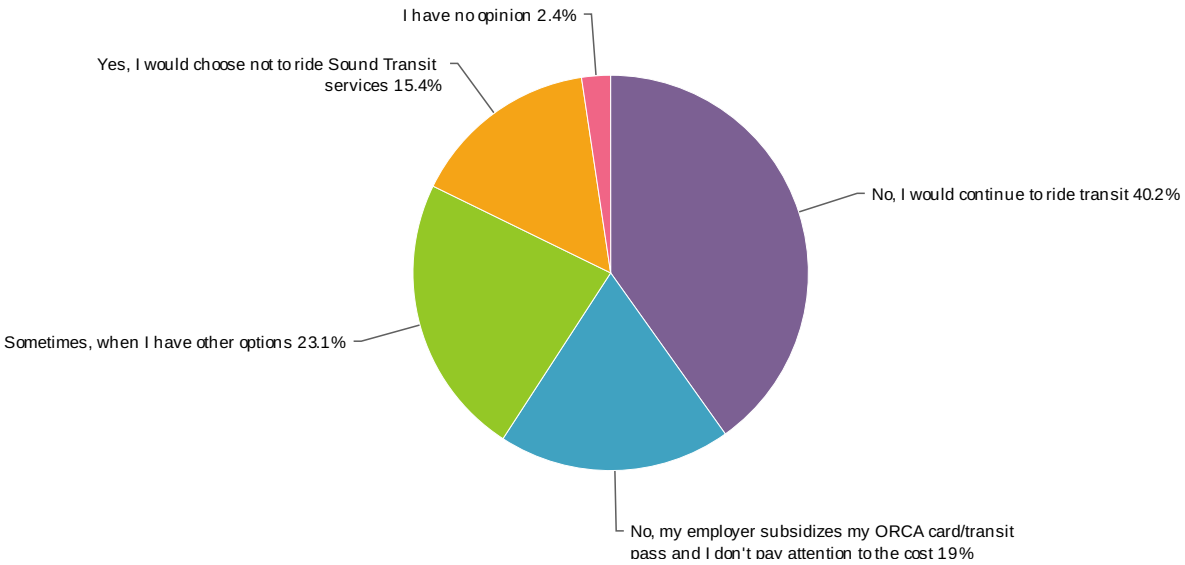
Adult	87.2%		780
Youth	0.6%		5
Reduced (senior or person with disability)	12.3%		110
		Total	895

5. If you pay an adult fare now, would you qualify for a discounted fare which would require a household income at or below 200% of federal poverty level? (Example: For a household of four, annual income would be at or below $47,700)



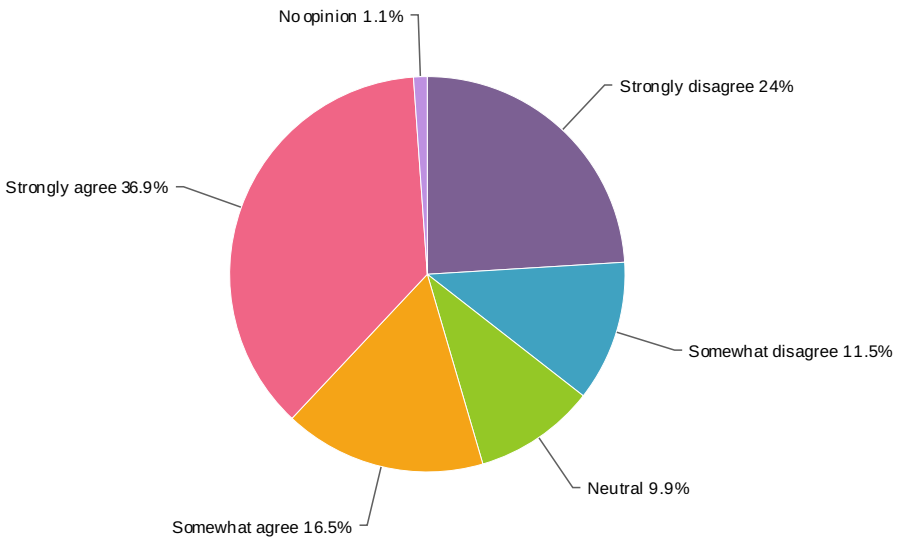
Yes	13.4%		119
No	76.9%		684
N/A (I already pay a discounted youth or reduced fare)	9.7%		86
		Total	889

6. If fare changes are implemented, would it make you less interested in riding Sound Transit services?


I have no opinion 2.4%
Yes, I would choose not to ride Sound Transit services 15.4%
No, I would continue to ride transit 40.2%
Sometimes, when I have other options 23.1%
No, my employer subsidizes my ORCA card/transit pass and I don't pay attention to the cost 19%

No, I would continue to ride transit	40.2%		357
No, my employer subsidizes my ORCA card/transit pass and I don't pay attention to the cost	19.0%		169
Sometimes, when I have other options	23.1%		205
Yes, I would choose not to ride Sound Transit services	15.4%		137
I have no opinion	2.4%		21
		Total	889

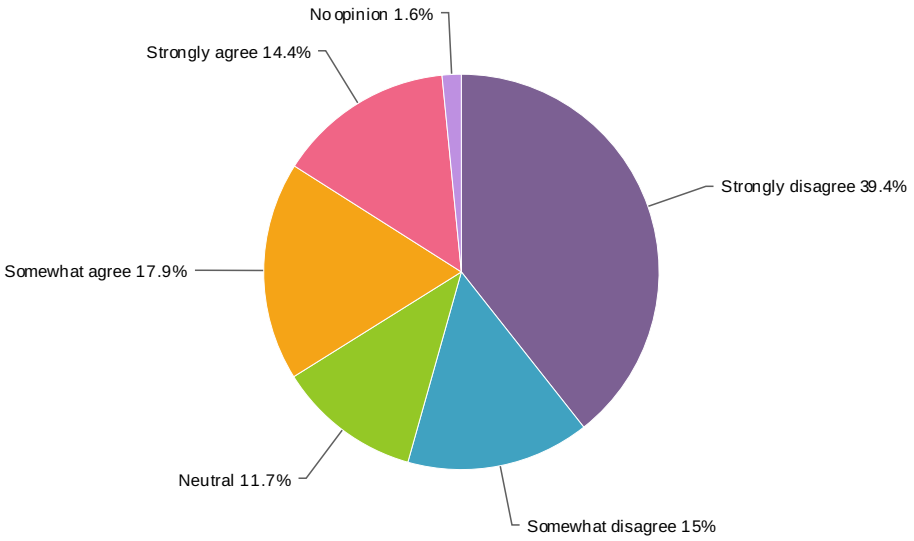
7. “Sound Transit should implement a discounted fare for low-income adult riders.” Do you agree/disagree with this statement?



Strongly disagree	24.0%		215
Somewhat disagree	11.5%		103
Neutral	9.9%		89
Somewhat agree	16.5%		148
Strongly agree	36.9%		330
No opinion	1.1%		10
		Total	895

Statistics	
Sum	6,570.0
Average	7.3
StdDev	1.6
Max	10.0

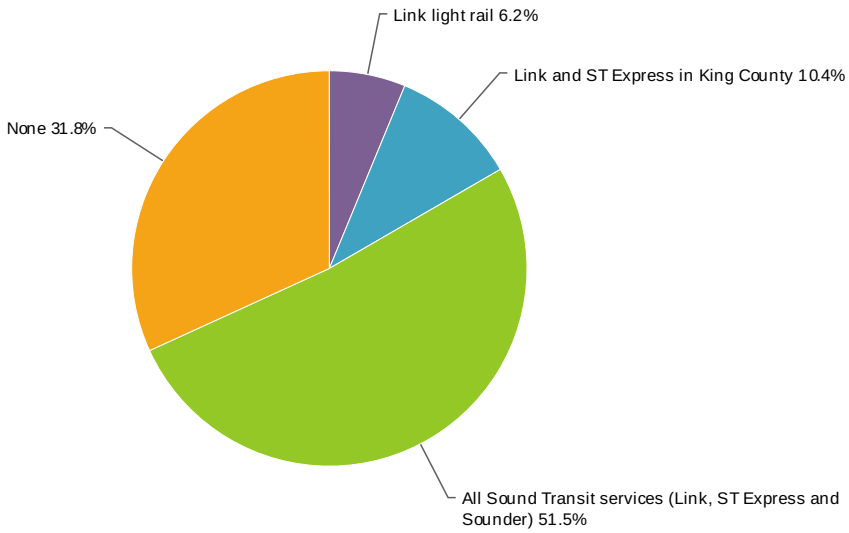
8. “If Sound Transit were to implement a discounted fare for low-income adult riders, it should raise fares for other riders to offset the revenue loss.” Do you agree/disagree with this statement?



Strongly disagree	39.4%		352
Somewhat disagree	15.0%		134
Neutral	11.7%		105
Somewhat agree	17.9%		160
Strongly agree	14.4%		129
No opinion	1.6%		14
		Total	894

Statistics	
Sum	5,880.0
Average	6.6
StdDev	1.6
Max	10.0

9. On which services should Sound Transit implement a discounted fare for low-income adult riders and raise fares for other passengers?


Link light rail 6.2%
Link and ST Express in King County 10.4%
None 31.8%
All Sound Transit services (Link, ST Express and Sounder) 51.5%

Link light rail	6.2%		55
Link and ST Express in King County	10.4%		92
All Sound Transit services (Link, ST Express and Sounder)	51.5%		455
None	31.8%		281
		Total	883

Attachment E: Comments received via paper and online survey form (Question 10/open-ended)

10. Would you like to share anything else with Sound Transit about this fare change proposal?

Count	Response
1	Dense Boner forest
1	Think disabled should also get discount.
1	$47000 for a family of 4? It should be half that and I would suport it
1	All reduced fares should require ORCA to speed payment and keep service moving.
1	Anything to help the riders and employers utilize the services Sound Transit
1	Are other increases needed anytime soon? If so consider combining them.
1	Before you think about changing fares you should first enforce the ones you have.
1	Better improve the operational and management efficiency instead of raising the fair.
1	Bring back transfer agreements between Seattle metro and ST!!!
1	Bus Fare and Train fare is too much high.
1	Change the fare on the buses not the trains (link and sounder)
1	Change the fares in this way and I'll sue for unfair fare practices.
1	Cost sharing is important. Encouraging more riders on public transit is desirable.
1	Costs go up, and with it you have to bolster the revenue stream. Ain't inflation great?
1	Determining qualification and enacting will be a challenge.
1	Do not raise fares. They are Already way too expensive. There are more riders than ever.
1	Don't do it
1	Don't you dare raise the rates.
1	Enough is enough. We pay enough taxes to pay for the service. Do not waste our money!
1	Fairness doesn't necessarily mean equality. If I can help others, I think it's fair.
1	Fares for disabled riders and seniors should not be raised.
1	Fares should be fair for all.
1	Forcing poor people to fill out a bunch of paperwork to get a reduced fare is not helpful.
1	Getting old, no income, still talk about bus fare increase. Please forget about it.
1	Good idea. Don't wuss out and drop it.
1	Great and dependable service
1	Happy with the service!
1	Hate to say it but if you do this you will most likely need armed transit police on the trains.
1	Help people w disabilities like myself!
1	I absolutely do not agree with the increased bus fare for the low-income senior citizens.

1	I already pay 135.00 a month to ride sound transit, enough is enough
1	I am already paying taxes to subsidize these government provided services.
1	I am in favor of sharing the cost of subsidizing fares for low-income people.
1	I am strongly against paying more taxes or fees in support of others.
1	I believe the low income fare should be limited to $1.00
1	I can't afford an increase in the fare.
1	I do not agree with the increased bus fare for the senior citizens.
1	I do not agree with the increased fare for the senior citizen.
1	I don't see how this is even the least bit fare! Same cost for all.
1	I support Option 4.
1	I think a low income fare is a good idea that merits additional consideration.
1	I think that reduced fares are a great idea.
1	I think this is a great idea and should be implemented. Thank you for asking for input!
1	I think this is a great idea!
1	I will select option 4.
1	I would not ride if price raised for non low income
1	I would ride the Transit more if there's more bike options available.
1	I would support option 4. The rate increase of .25 is a reasonable increase.
1	I'm sick of paying more for others. Keep the fare FAIR!
1	If Drivers would insist people pay what their suppose to, there would be more income for ST.
1	If you have yo raise the prices at least bring back the tranfurs for the buses.
1	Increase in quarter (1/4) increments
1	Is it possible to provide express bus service?
1	It is unfair to raise fares on one low-income group (seniors) to help another.
1	It's already 9$ a day between train and bus
1	Just no to fare increase
1	Keep it as is
1	Keep senior rates the same
1	Keep up the good work.
1	Living wage is better than discounted prices
1	Low income people need mass transit to survive. Please make it affordable!
1	Lower cost should increase ridership which would cover the fares.

1	Lower fares for children
1	Make Youth fare $1.00 Raise the adults fare only.
1	Make cycling more accessible!
1	NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO
1	NO NOT SURE
1	No
1	No comment
2	No other comments
1	No thank you
1	No, but add another 522 bus in downtown Seattle. Make the last bus 1230 instead of 1130
1	No.
1	None
1	Nope, but thanks for asking!
1	Nope. I very much believe in a user based fee structure.
1	Not at this time.
1	On question #5, how is it that an individual can have 200% below the federal poverty level?
1	Our fares are reasonable and lower than many metro locations. A discount is not necessary.
1	People above the age of 65 shall be free
1	People on limited incomes it would help tremendously.
1	Please do not increase bus fare for the senior citizen.
1	Please do not increase bus fare for the senior citizens.
1	Please do not tax the middle class anymore!!
1	Please don't punish those of us who are seniors and on a limited income.
1	Please don't reduce bus availability in implementing this!
1	Please make Sound Transit affordable to low income people!
1	Public transit should be available to the public without user fees.
1	Raising the Senior fare from $.75 to $1.00 seems fair to me.
1	Retired persons should be free of charge
1	Senior citizens above the age of 65 should be free of charge
1	Sound Transit should provide free bus services to the senior citizen above the age of 80.
1	Sound transit continues its tradition of less sevice for more money.
1	Sound transit should not be in the business of subsidizing ANYONE

1	Sounds fair (pardon the puns)!
1	Stop subsidizing off the backs of the rapidly disappearing "middle class".
1	Stop trying to balance your budget on the backs of the elderly and disabled.
1	Thank you for considering a low income fare. I hope you are able to implement it.
1	There should be some way for senior citizens to get a reduced fare.
1	This is a very bad idea.
1	Those who use transit need to pay for it.
1	Tired of paying more in life, due to other peoples laziness...
1	We shouldn't be penalized to arbitrarily help others for their bus fare.
1	Whatever you can do to get voters to vote to fund public transportation you should do.
1	With the price raising, it is cheaper to drive into work at this point.
1	Yes please, how would you determine lower cost for orca members that ride?
1	You should start running the sounder train mid-day in both directions south.
1	dont
1	fuck everyone increasing is stupid lol
1	great job
1	if my fare is increased... every-one's fare should be increased.
1	n/a
1	You're a transit company, not a social service agency. Income redistribution punishes the people who've worked hard and made good choices. If you're low income, there's a solution - work hard(er), better yourself, be a responsible, law-abiding citizen and invest in yourself for your own future. Been there, done that - didn't ask for or accept any handouts. Why bother trying if someone's just going to give it to you for nothing? Great way to build a country!
1	Sound Transit has become more expensive in these last few years, I now pay a total of $8 each day I ride the bus, to and from work. I am able to pay this because my work subsidizes my fare, and contributes enough to pay for most of my monthly pass. However, I know many people that are not in the same situation and are either forced to pay the full fare or for go the bus. This leads to people unable to get to their jobs (especially if they do not own a car) and for car drivers it contributes to a longer commute because there are more cars on the road which cause more traffic. If public transportation was cheaper & more accessible more people would ride public transportation. You have experienced a decrease in riders because public transportation is no longer convenient - even with more cars on the road and more traffic, often times it is still quicker and cheaper for commuters to drive their own car (if they have a car). For those without a car, the people with the most need of a low-income fare this is a great inconvenience, and could mean the difference of them keeping their job.
1	I think that the state has to participate in offsetting the expense as well. Otherwise state wouldn't be interested in helping people to increase their quality of living.
1	I think before you implement a new low income program at the expense of those of us who have to ride to commute to work, you should fix the route times and parking to help us who are working commuters. Parking is horrible at the train stations and the trains are crowded and run on times that don't match day shift work hours. Example: Trains leave at 12 min after the hour vs 15 min after the hour. Thanks.
1	A low-income fare is good, but fund it by getting rid of senior fares. If a senior is low-income, then the senior can have the discounted fare.

1	Are the low-income adult riders currently complaining that they cannot afford to ride Sound Transit because it is too expensive? The Sound Transit system is typically centered around individuals going to work, and not to just get on and spend the day in Seattle. If the low-income adult rider wants to come to Seattle to spend the day, then they should be able to afford the fare.
1	i understand fares need to go up, but the service on Sounder needs to be better..A week doesn't go by that I get a notice that its' been cancelled , or delayed. there is a need for more trains or add cars to the existing trains.
1	How many people would actually qualify for the reduced rate? The entire fare system that uses "zones" instead of distance should be reconsidered. Bring the buses in line with the way the light rail and sounder trains work.
1	I would love to see continued Light Rail extension throughout the Puget Sound; Ballard to the Eastside, West Seattle to Bellevue, etc. I live three blocks from the new Capitol Hill station and I can't wait for it to begin operations; LINK is SO superior to King County Metro bus services.
1	We already have expensive public transportation in comparison with other major metropolitan areas which is very likely cost prohibitive for low income riders. Keep regular rider fares the same, discount low income, and run the business more efficiently. Any "revenue loss" is negligible as you may pick up more riders overall with keeping fares same/reasonable and attracting more low income riders.
1	I live in Seattle I don't own a car, I just turned 24 two days ago, I only work part time. If the low income fare passes for Metro and Sound Transit I could go visit family every weekend instead of 1x a month (they live in Tacoma).
1	It seems like a good idea to offer a lower cost option to those who need it. I just wish the rest of us didn't require a fare increase to pay for it.
1	What would the fare increase be used for? I have not seen great strides by Sound Transit to improve the efficiency of the Light Rail. For example, after Seahawks games, the trains are absolutely packed for quite some time. Why has there been no consideration of adding a third car to the train? That's the beauty of rail - you can add more cargo with not much effort.
1	I am strongly opposed to a rate increase at this time. Sound Transit is a regional transit system not a local bus system such as King County Metro. Sound Transit does not have follow or do what King County Metro proposes. As a user of Sound Transit services, The way I see this is that Sound Transit is asking for a rate increase to help subsidize in running this low income program. I already subsidize running Sound Transit buses to Olympia. (Which is not in the RTA) Sound Transit has what I feel are more important things to improve upon. Crowded buses, half empty buses, lack of fare enforcement, equipment maintenance my list goes on... strongly against any fare increase
1	Making mass transit more affordable to low income individuals is a great idea. However, the fare discount needs to be on purchasing a pass, not on cash fare paid in the bus. It would both be demeaning to have to plead poverty each time you board a bus, it would also be subject to fraud.
1	Sound Transit should focus on increasing overall ridership and on making the cost of riding attractive for all income levels. I support discounting the cost for low-income riders, but not at the expense of other riders. Please consider other options to offset the revenue loss.
1	Access to transportation is a basic necessity and should be affordable and accessible to everyone. It has become very costly especially for working families to access buses and light rail. A reduced fare for Sound Transit especially for Light Rail would make public transportation more accessible and cost effective for low-income working families.
1	I work as an advocate with many low-income individuals in the Downtown Seattle area. Often my clients are able to find work in areas that require them to take Sound Transit, but the higher fare has kept them from being able to commute there and keep their employment. A reduced fare would be highly beneficial in helping my clients gain employment and obtain permanent housing.
1	Sound Transit should look into corporate sponsorship or other means then having the other passengers pay. This is showing favoritism for a specific group at the expense of the greater group. By offering significantly lower fares to low income, it will reflect on the type of clientele served. Another recommendation is to revert back to providing Link in Tacoma free fares for everyone. If Sound Transit wants to be fair, then they need to offer discounts to groups, such as the military/veterans.
1	There needs to be an implementation that addresses both train and bus options since most riders need both to get home and

	to their appointment.
1	Bus fare is already pretty expensive if it costs around 120 dallars to take the bus too and from seattle to federal way for just one month, being paid minimum wage i can say it is hard to even get the money to go to and from work so i beleive bus far prices are fair for both the consumers and sound and transit
1	There are other ways to cover costs. Focus on raising fare recovery ratio with longer vehicles, driverless trains, and TOD instead of parking at stations. Northgate, Angle Lake, and Lynnwood Link plans are awful. Link and ST Express must have low income fare; aren't you already working to integrate better with Metro? Don't create preverse incentives where the slow 7 is cheaper than Link. Pierce and Snohomish also deserve low income fare, but don't make people go to King to get it. ORCA should be a $2 refundable deposit, You should give us a way to check how much time is left on a transfer. The ORCA website takes far too long to update. Make it instantaneous, make a smartphone app where we can see recent history, offer a hotline people can call to enter their ORCA number and see how much time is left. For some of us, it makes a big difference in where we go or if we go somewhere or take transit at all. Also let us add value to cards on buses like in Washington DC. *Option 1 is unacceptable. Implement Option 3 at leas in March. Then work towards option 4 ASAP. Thanks!
1	I don't know the facts on this, but not sure how many low-income riders there are on the Sounder train. With the train providing service during commuter times only (some sports events), the majority of the riders are commuting to/from work, not just using the train to get from point A to Point B, as they might use the Link and Metro buses. I would be more willing to pay a fare increase if the additional funds would be applied to train equipment so there were less mechanical issues. Trains being late due to mechanical issues has become quite frequent. Parking also continues to be an issue. When the Sounder Train was introduced, commuters were encourage to ride the train and unfortunately it does not appear plans for additional parking were considered for the increase in commuters.
1	Offering a discount to low-income riders is a good idea. However, I would not support doing so if it would mean increasing fares for student, senior or disabled riders. If increased fares are necessary, it should only be for those adults who do not qualify for the low-income discount. The reasoning is that those of us who earn above the cutoff are best able to absorb the fare increase. Also, most of us (adults with jobs that pay above the cutoff) work for employers who subsidize our bus passes. If a $0.25 increase from this smaller adult group is not enough, consider a larger increase.
1	Those most in need of Sound Transit services have the fewest resources with which to access it. They have no other choice. We must, as a community, help them access schools, work, health care, and social service agencies through support of affordable regional transit.
1	Currently Seattle is set to implement a $15. Minimum wage for uneducated positions that will have the effective impact of substantially inflating costs for the same group of individuals you are looking at raising fares on. I am sorry that I can not support my family and everyone else with my marginally higher than poverty rate income; however, it is all I can do to keep a roof
1	DO NOT offset costs for a discounted fare by raising fares for other riders! This region needs to be ENCOURAGING more people to ride transit; raising fares does just the opposite. Offset the costs by implementing something like an employers head tax; employers benefit the most from transit that is reliable and affordable for its workers!
1	I don't think it's fair to make the regular fare passengers pay for the low income riders. Maybe the people that get on the inter county express buses could pay their fare?
1	Please provide a low-income adult fare. While I am not a frequent user of Sound Transit, I am happy to pay an increased fare for myself. Much of the safety net has been cut back over the last few years. This reduced rate will support those who are struggling to survive, let alone thrive in our society.
1	For those of use who use Sound Transit to commute to professional jobs in Seattle or elsewhere, Sound Transit is a tool that we use to earn (often quite a bit) of money. I am more than happy to pay for this service, and feel it is very reasonable that Sound Transit raise fares for those of us who can afford it. I know that mass transit provides public benefits as well, which is why taxpayers pay to support Sound Transit, but it also makes sense that those of us who benefit most directly continue to shoulder a sizable portion of the costs. At the same time, I would also strongly advocate that Sound Transit provide reduced fares for low-income and other eligible groups.
1	I work for a transit agency, and can see major problems if this system is not implemented with the entire ORCA program. There would be low-income customers that would be traveling within the Metro area on Sound Transit, but not able to get the lower rate if their card was purchased outside the area. If low income clientele were eligible to get the lower rate there but not

	elsewhere, it would be very confusing for both clientele and trying to explain the system.
1	Before you consider raising rates, maybe you should consider those riding the Sounder already. Consider more rail car sweeps for those not paying and if not paying, banish them from riding. Also, the wifi rarely works. Educating rail staff in how to reset or replace them would be helpful. There isn't enough security to ask those who don't follow the rules to keep feet on the floor and off the seats.
1	Those of us who pay are getting the best ride possible. Sound Transit needs to get people to pay for their carriage. Why not make the case that the fares should be moving in the direction of at least break even, if not a profit. It is a fact that all kinds of rail are money losers. This should not be, as taxes make up the difference. Why not make the facts known and make a good case for fares that equal "at least" the expense of driving a car with one person plus parking. If you come in lower, people will continue to ride the public transportation. If you raise it too high, they will drive. If the IRS gives a mileage for certain deductions, then this should be figured in, or, for a person who claims all auto expenses, this should be considered. How about changing the earmarked gasoline tax to go for revenues for public transportation. Result: the more people drive, the more revenue for public trans. Tom Henstock
1	Instead of raising the bus fare $0.25 on in-county or inter-county Sound Transit Express bus trip, you may raise it up to $3 and $4 to make it an even dollar fare instead of $2.75 and $3.75. I don't like the low-income fare proposal that much because I don't trust the low income fare approval process, but would accept it as is.
1	Metro is setting the tone and leading the way - Sound Transit should take the cue and keep transit accessible for those who need it most.
1	King County seems to have the highest need for this program; maybe the regular fare could be raised only in that county. The cost of living is not so outrageous in Pierce or Snohomish counties.
1	You already cut services due to budget cuts. Why do you accept more subsidies for riders cost? Don't spend money you don't have. Cut cost and if you have proficit - implement subsidies. Thank you.
1	How would the bus driver know that a rider qualifies for the low income fare? It would not be fair for those who are on the verge of qualifying and then being above the requirements. If a plan is being made to help the low income, how about making a plan for college students taking the metro?
1	I'm genuinely all for low income fare reduction, but if you're going to raise prices then we should get our money's worth. The early 510 is consistently standing room only!! Even without standing, at least 50 people ride each bus. At the $100 or more an orca card costs, that is $5000 per month you receive just from one bus. Where is the $ going? Certainly not on new buses or maintenance. Last year I was late to work 3 times because buses broke down. I can no longer count on one hand how many times I've had to ride on those old buses with the low, crappy velveteen seats. The 510 route should have buses coming more often or double deckers during peak commuter hours so that everyone gets a seat and it isn't such cramped quarters.
1	Get rid of senior fares as a separate class. If the seniors have means, they should pay the same as anyone else. If they don't have means, they should qualify for the low-income fare.
1	It already costs me $9/day to ride the train. To drive it costs me about $10/day. What would be the incentive to keep riding the Sounder Train? If you guys want to keep making money and be successful, not only should you keep the rates the same, but you should also have trains on the weekends. In addition to more trains, you should also think about the fact that most riders are not informed in a timely manner about late trains and cancelled trains because of your personnel not getting accurate information in a timely manner. Most of the people that I have talked to, in passing that ride the same trains as I do, are just as upset with the fact that we sign up for the text and email notifications, only to receive them after the trains have already arrived very, very late.
1	I'd be hesitant to make a fare change that discourages middle-income people from riding the bus. I see a lot of tech and finance workers no the bus who could easily afford a moderate fare increase, but there are many people who depend on transit who could not. I know that this is out of your control, but Washington badly needs an income tax.
1	Thank you for asking the public for their opinion. This is a good idea I support the rate increase.
1	Since the purpose is to align Metro and Sounder fares, it makes most sense to do it on King County services.
1	I would like to enter a couple blog posts and their commentary into the record: http://seattletransitblog.com/2014/09/22/sound-

	transit-to-consider-low-income-fare-and-25-cent-fare-increase/ http://seattletransitblog.com/2014/10/15/34-st-express-cash-fares-sound-transit-could-use-the-extra-revenue/ Thanks, Brent White
1	The subsidized fares for lower income riders should be a pass through charge to the public assistance programs, SNAP, Federal Income Tax, Students, Unemployment and Disability Programs. Before you leverage this increase in fares on the mid and higher income riders you should asses how much support is already provided and available to riders in the lower income category. If a person is on these programs let those programs provide funding for them, in that way the total social cost of low income is packaged where it can be assesed. It is not ST's mission to provide public assistance, it's a Transportation organization, don't meddle in the other programs, let them assist and fund you. I would like to see ST become so mainstream that all income categories use the service. I am a regular week day user. I am not degraded by being a "transit user" and I happen to be in the higher income category, it's a real convenience and makes my life better. I have peers of both mid and higher income category who think transit is for low income and social groups they would not like to associate with, and somtimes fear. At times when I get on an bus route or mode of tranportation where I don't feel safe or passengers are not behaving civily (and I'm sorry to say it is sometimes the special assistance, social funded category of riders) I'm de-motivated to ever use that service again. You must asses and factor in the population that will be encourged to use lower priced transit and the impact it will have on all ridership. This is a hard social topic to tackle but I expect ST to be diligent in this matter. I expect ST to analyze the free ride zone that Seattle King Transit abolished, partially to avoid the types of problems that might crop up if this subsidized system is implemented. ST is also proposing to fund the subsidy on the backs of the the other category riders. This is a foolhardy move that will backfire in public perception.
1	Metro is now beginning a slide in service that is going to eventually create an even larger decline in ridership. The manufacturer of the buses being used for the "alphabet" lines remnind me of prison buses, andthe notion of them being "rapid ride" is ludicrous. Now I notice they are starting to be used on my route, which by the way I have been using for the last 20 years. The seats are narrower, hard and uncomfortable. The lights are to bright and sterile. In general I think the King County Council and Metro officials have no concept that they serve the public; they think that the public serves them.
1	I STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH DISCOUNTED FARE FOR LOW-INCOME ADULT RIDERS. This is not fair for average income riders to raise the fare. Their are too many low income riders to offset the cost for average income riders. Average income families already get 'nickel and dimed' from everything else and everyone keeps raising the price on us; which keeps lowering our income and gives us a very tight budget. By increasing fare on other average incoming rider this tightens our budget that much more. Once you raise the fare; because their are so many low income riders you will just continue to raise the fare in the coming years because it's not enough which will cause average riders to start driving to work (Lakewood-Seattle) because it makes no financial sense to ride transit anymore. Please keep this logic in mind when making your decision.
1	This is a great, forward-thinking idea. Our whole region must come to see public transportation as a public good, and it has to be affordable for everyone. Match the Metro fare, and spread the accessibility! We will lead the west coast.
1	It would seem that the proposed fare increase ($0.25) has been arbitrarily set at the same level identified by King County Metro. Has ST done any analysis of its own to identify the potential loss in fare revenue associated with the low income program? I suspect not, otherwise why is the fare increase the same across all of the alternatives presented? The fare increases should be estimated for each individual transit mode based to keep fare revenues neutral across they system.
1	The low-income fare eligibility threshold seems relatively low when compared with the cost of living in Seattle and the rest of the area that Sound Transit serves. For example, a single person who makes just $24,000 per year will not qualify for the low-income fare, yet it is nearly impossible to live in the Seattle area on that low of a salary. My household does not qualify for the low-income fare being proposed, but we're already living paycheck to paycheck because rent, utilities, and other costs are rising at a rate that we can't keep up with. An increased transit fare would only add to that burden.
1	NO to more subsidies!! The bus line is subsidized and is widely available. Adding to the high cost of commuting via Sounder rail is a bad idea and NOT necessary as Sounder rail service routes are served by the bus line. If the plan is to get people out of busses and into rail then it should pay for itself by elimination of some bus routes. For people who are fortunate enough to have an employer offered benefit of reduced or a fully funded ORCA card/transit pass I'm sure they want to keep it. When costs go up, it's a funny thing but employers want to stay in business so they reduce jobs or benefits. Bad idea!
1	I think the Sounder fare, and I do ride Sounder, is wholesale too low to set at 1.50. I think for Sounder specifically it should be the same as youth fare. Other than that, and assuming I don't need to carry a second ID past just my ORCA card, I'm in. I live pretty parsimoniously so I can afford fares as they are, and we really should have a progressive tax to fund service, but that's not likely as things are.
1	Thanks for considering this to start with. I, like many low income, and minimum wage workers have little to no spare income.

	It's just enough to put food on the table and keep a roof over our heads We don't drive our own cars and add too the negative consequence to all that, so maybe cut us a break on the fare. It would be very much appreciated
1	Offering a low income option and making other's pay for their reduce ride fare is not fair. It's called socialism. It is not for me. I worked hard and went to school for my education. Paid my way and suffered through it along the way. It's called hard work.
1	I work with low-income homeless families in South King County. Currently their only mode of semi-affordable transportation is metro and that is sporadic in South King County at best. Disounted fares on all modes of Sound Transit would give low income and homeless families more options to travel to and from vital appointments or employment.
1	I feel strongly in favor of this change as long as income guidelines are reasonable. I don't mind paying extra to ride if this would truly help the needy, but I do feel that income level limits must be enforced to prevent abuse of the new fare.
1	Hi, I am working professional who is dependent on public transit. I would be glad to pay more, especially if having a low-income program will help allow us to further raise the adult fares in the future, which ultimately could provide more revenue and could lead to more frequent transit service. So please raise the fares. Thank you.
1	Pay scales are remaining steady with many people experiencing pay cuts, for those employed. Rising costs of food, fuel, taxes, housing etcetera. I support discounted fares for low income but oppose any fee incresases. Increased ridership should increase income and this should be the focus of attention and not increasing fees. Thank you.
1	No increase bus fare to low income senior citizens. Wish to increase bus numbers or at least not to decrease bus numbers.
1	Middle income commuters would feel the brunt of the increase. Rent's are high, gas, baby sitters etc. Low income people already get help in all of these areas and it would not be fair to treat people differently. Bring the low rate up and the higher rate down and meet in the middle so everyone pays the same.
1	If a fare raise is deemed necessary, it should be borne by the adult passengers, NOT seniors, youth and disabled.
1	Make only Link Light Rail more expensive. HOWEVER...implement raised fares on Bus Service During ALL Sports Games. Make those able to pay for season tickets to sports pay the higher prices. Do this on Sounder and ST Express Buses. You can rake in a lot of bucks because most of those people don't even ride the bus except during the games.
1	Start enforcing payment of fairs. I see large busses running with very few people on the, use smaller vans on these routes, it doesn't take a huge study to figure this out. Use some common sense. No more overtime.
1	I appreciate wanting to help those in need. What frustrates me is the fact that it is assumed I will pick up the cost for that. To do so all the time negatively impacts my family.
1	I will refuse to support Sound Transit if they implement discounted fair for lower income riders! Transit already offers them a discounted rate because they don't have to drive their own vehicle...THAT'S THEIR DISCOUNT!!! If they don't want the expense of a commute then DON'T take a job that requires them to commute, seems pretty simple to me. It is not my responsibility to pay them to take a job they can't afford to take. We are not a socialist economy!
1	ST is making good progress with regards to farebox recovery on Link and Sounder. Why ruin the progress? Also would be a mistake to lower Sounder fares. Because.... The train is currently a peaceful cocoon, with only a few rare and comically out of place anomalies. I fear a lower fare would lower the quality of service and atmosphere in the train. Generally making the train more like a south county Metro bus than a Japanese Shinkansen . Right now, go get on a Sounder and it's quiet, clean, doesn't smell, polite, friendly, serene, calm, non-threatening. But go get on any Renton/Kent/Auburn bus. It is loud, dirty, smelly, etc. This is a function of income per rider. Why ruin the good thing we have going on the sounder? The Sounder is like our commuting secret. We have unspoken rules and boarding/seating systems, we have friendly crews, we have shared stories, we avoid eye contact. Why do we need to ruin it with a lower fare?
1	How is the middle class supposed to continue paying for low income issues. We are being sucked dry. Our spending habits will continue to decrease since everything else is going up. You cut some routes because of budget, but now expect the public to pay to have low income continue to use the service. How about doing a campaign the correct way - don't preach to the ones that use your service, preach to the public who don't that it is important to have the funding. This just isn't the appropriate way.
1	I think it would be pretty unfair to low income people in Pierce County if the reduced fare was King County only. They already

	have no service after 10pm after a 300,000 service hour reduction. I have a friend who spends money he does not have on cabs from Tacoma Dome Station to his apartment 3 miles away after working late at the airport. Remember it's called Sound Transit and not King County Transit. Thank you for considering this change!
1	I am a young professional. Until recently, I would have qualified for a low-income discounted fair; now that my income has increased, I feel it is important to pay full fare for myself, and to ensure that other low-income folks have adequate and affordable access to public transportation. I am very supportive of the low-income discount fare. That said, I am by no means wealthy, and must spend my money carefully. I often will alter my mode of transportation based on cost (bike instead of bus, bike-and-bus instead of taking a bus-and-light-rail, etc) so a fare increase that is too significant will cause me to ride ST less frequently by figuring our new, or more affordable transportation. Thanks for listening!
1	I live in Pierce County and take the Sounder train daily. I see no reason why I should have to subsidize anybody needing a low income fare in King county. If you feel really greedy and decide to raise all of your fares you should only increase the Sounder fares in King county.
1	Raising the normal adult rider rates to provide the funds to assist low-income riders is something I am willing to go along with. King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties really don't provide much in the way of basic services and assistance for lower income people. And frankly, it's shameful. That said, I also don't believe for a moment that passing the revenue loss onto higher-income riders is the only way the additional funds can be obtained. If the amount of waste, pork expenditures, and just plain poor financial management were to be curbed – even a little – I am confident the necessary funds could be found (and then some) without raising rates for others for in an already over-priced, under-serviced transit system. But better I do my part to help others with a fare increase, than local governments doing nothing at all, even if it means picking someone else's pocket as a solution.
1	It would be nice for Sound Transit to run the trains on time more often. The delays on the north train to Everett has gone from bad to worse to the point that I can not depend on the train to get to work on time any more. I have had to switch to a Comm. Transit bus when I need to get to work on time for meetings. That is more of a concern to me than increasing the fares the fares. Fares go up, dependable service goes down. What 's wrong with this picture?
1	ST and Metro are making the fare structures too complicated. Between zones, time of day, age, and income it's too many different fares. How much is it going to cost to administer this? Also, pet peeve, but why does every example of low income assume a family of four? Singles can be low income.
1	It already is a hefty price to pay. Yes it is less expensive than commuting yourself, but not by much; so if you choose to use the regular riders to bear this additional expense, I will go back to driving myself. Public transit will no longer appeal to me as a more economical way to get to work. Find another way to implement this program, Sound Transit. Stop penalizing the regular riders. I may not be " poverty" level, but I am not rich by any stretch of the imagination either. I'm trying to cut costs too so that I can take care of my mother and me on my income.
1	I cannot afford this change. I would but qualify for low income but I am writing poor due to going it if business during the economy bust and racking up debt in an attempt to save it. So, while I may own a house, I am barely hanging on to it all. This would probably make me have my wife drive me in, and when she can't, drive in and park as close as I can where it is free and ride my bike to work, since the cost of commuting by light rail and bus each day is actually already more expensive than gas.
1	Two thoughts: Make the discounted fare for all AND be REALLY careful about asking the rest of us subsidize this… Sound Transit fares are already higher than the norm ($2 all-day Skagit Transit, $1 Everett Transit & $2 Community Transit).
1	Just offer the discount, why should people who make over 45K pick up the cost!! Again, just give them a reduce rate.!!
1	I'm assuming this is an application based fare program. If so then I strongly agree. Any family of four living on that income level needs some help with transit to make sure their wage earners can get to work efficiently and within their means. And I assume also that not all employers - especially in that wage range - subsidize their employees commute. I think it works for the economy as a whole.
1	For those of us who do have an Orca card and pay cash fares, please leave the one county fare at 2.50 or increase it to $ 3.00; it will simply be too inconvenient to pay a cash fare o$2.75.
1	I feel that deals cut with large companies to provide the employees of these large companies ORCA cards at reduced rates is inappropriate use of tax payer dollars. The cost of a monthly/year pass on an ORCA card should not vary on the company you work for. In regards to subsidizing fares for students, seniors and those with low incomes, I take no exception.

1	I'm looking forward to the discounted rate for low income riders. This will definitely benefit families in need during this tough economy.
1	fares should NOT go up, they have been rising for the last few years. Between the cuts in service and rising fares it DISCOURAGES riders. For example, my dad and his coworkers had all rode public transportation to work. But with the cuts in service it became cheaper and faster for them to drive individually. Which is counter intuitive to reducing carbon emissions, to reducing traffic, and an overall better commute to and from work. Riding the bus has become very expensive and inconvenient - living/ commuting to the city should be made easier, cheaper, and quicker - guarantee more people would support it if it met their needs. With fares as high as they are, and less service overall, there does need to be low-income fare so that they can continue to go to work. For some people, this is their only transportation, there are no other options. However, low-income fare is not the answer, overall it needs to be cheaper, easier, and more convenient if you want to increase users and reduce overall traffic - which would make everyone's commute that much easier.
1	I commute from Everett to Seattle daily, and resent the fact that the working class should have to pay more for the deadbeats that don't work (even when they can and are I able). I'm all for helping those in need, but the majority "that I see" are just pot smoking drunks, 16 year old girls with their babies, and the scum of society going to and from their court mandated hearings and visiting their probation officers. There HAS to be a better way to help the less fortunate than this!!!
1	I ride the Sounder and I oppose the increased fare. $6.50 per day is already too high of a cost in my opinion, relative to the cost of other transit options and the cost of gas. For me, it costs a little bit MORE than gas to ride the train and that is a disincentive for attracting riders. If you increase it even more then you are going to lose riders for sure.
1	I ride the bus often(not every day) and I see people get on in the downtown area who just walk on and don't pay and the drivers,no doubt to avoid a conflict, just let them go. if there was a way to control that, perhaps fare increases would not be needed. I agree that low income people need a break of some sort, but ther should be some regulation
1	I am currently losing my metro 250 route which I would transfer to 542. So I am very unhappy with metro politics that cut buses that are full.
1	I don't like the idea of increasing fares, but I know it might have to be done. Public Transit is the life blood of a city. And the fact is, the people that need it most - are the ones that are losing it the fastest. Making it even more expensive to be poor. I wish we could work on a larger movement where invested in affordable public transit as a city because the fact of the matter is raising transit prices might turn riders off but that is the only option we have to make it affordable. And that is not a real solution in the long run if we want to forward public transportation as the default method of transportation for most people.
1	It is difficult to make a reasonable assessment without understanding the projected revenue loss for offering the low-income fares, and how much loss offset would be made up by the 3 proposed options. I would like to see that analysis. Additionally, I would like to understand what cost savings measures and creative trip planning is occurring to help absorb the cost of the low income adult rider fares through operating efficiencies.
1	I think we all know how difficult it is to qualify for anything as low income. I make $35,000 a year and am a Gonzaga graduate with a Master's Degree. My student loan payments are upwards of $850 a month. Without assistance, I could not pay all of my bills and commute. However, I still do not qualify for low-income and have to make it work. It's not fair to punish others and raise their prices when they're already struggling to pay their own way. There are plenty of handouts for low income people. Why should I pay more for them to ride when i already pay out of my taxes for their EBT cards and housing? Please re-think this proposal. Thank you kindly for your time.
1	I feel that the discounted fare for low-income adult riders is a good idea but don't feel that other riders should have to pay more to offset the loss.
1	I do not wish to have my fare raised so others can have theirs reduced. It feels as though it is a punishment for not being "low-income".
1	I believe more people who ride the train are not low income. I do not think that the majority should be penalized for this.
1	I should not pay and extra $0.25 for someone who is low income and offering this to low income people - the type of people who will be riding the bus will be trouble people.
1	I would like to know. Since it appears the low income fare is $1.50, are the Senior/Disabled fares going to do the same thing, remain constant or have a max fare of $1.50?

1	Yes its about time you guys got on board with this like Metro has for several years now! You should also think about a family low income card as well thank you.
1	Yes, please do this! Please expand the low income fare for all sound transit services. All people deserve access to transit that they can afford!
1	You are targeting a specific population, and in order to do so, people would need to provide income verification. If you want to help people, i don't think putting a label up saying low- income fare 1.50 would make those who are employed, but not earning 47k a year feel very good about themselves. I get once its in the system on a orca no will know, but honestly, if i didn't live with my dad my income would have me in this category . I make a decent wage, a lot more than some, and i feel blessed to have a job i love, however it would cost me $7.00 a day if my employer didn't supply my Orca Pass.
1	Low income folks don't need to ride the sound trains and metro already offers this for low income riders. Sound doesn't need to offer this. Sound trains are meant for working middle class employees commuting to work earning a income to pay for all these benefits we already pay for low income folks. if u offer low income riders onto trains this makes it less appealing to ride the sounder trains. I see low income fares being sold out on the street for profit. I was asked one time if I wanted to buy a discounted fare on the street walking home. if u implement this fare change, increase security is needed on all sounder trains!! Please Account for that!! please we already have discounted fares for low income riders on metro why do we need to expand those for sounder!???
1	Before you ask our opinion you should be posted the "low-income" criteria for all levels not just a "household" of 4 making less than $47,700. Is this gross or net income? Is this "household" a working family or a family already getting other state and federal subsidies? Are these other state and federal subsidies counted & calculated into income which could bring them above $47,700? Will there be more commuter trains and routes added to support the new "low-income" riders? Does this mean a senior citizen making less than $11,925 considered low-income? Does this mean you are proposing a "low-income" rate for the Sounder from Seattle to Lakewood for $1.25 but a senior who has worked their whole life and living on a fixed income will be paying $3.00 after this implementation? How come there is not a "school" (kindergarten through 12th, trade school, 2 year or 4 year college) discount for those who are trying to improve their productivity to society? Why don't you have a "military" discount for active, reserve, and retired service people (our military is an all-volunteer service to protect the rights of the citizens of this nation and a financial contributor to the Puget Sound businesses)?
1	What percentage of your ridership is low income? Will discounting fares for low-income adult riders cause a shortage that would be remedied by a reduction in routes? I currently take the 567 and it is standing room only. We need additional routes or larger buses for this route. If you reduce fares, would that eliminate any possibility of addressing the overcrowding on this route? The 566 is the alternate choice to the 567. The commute hour buses for this route are also crowded. The 566 already has been eliminated in the middle of the day forcing anyone who has to leave at noon to take the 560 and, unfortunately, transfer in Renton. If you raise the fares, will you be able to reinstate the midday 566?
1	I support a fare increase that could help keep up with train maintenance, to help cut the amount of delays. Also I would pay more if there were more available trips each way.
1	I would hope that any low-income fare program would take into account the potential ridership habits of low-income riders, and manage that effectively (ie getting to the station; schedules; etc.). Simply adding a low-income fare without supporting infrastructure would be a wasted exercise. Also, would this put additional pressure on already strained parking situations? (Can I put in a desperate plea for Sound Transit to address the lack of parking at all stops?)
1	I'd love to use public transportation if more routes are available. We need an upfront investment to expand the routes, because right now, it's hard to wean myself away from cars as I'd have to waste 2~3 hours riding the Transit otherwise.
1	I enjoy having the Sounder as a commute option. My frustration is the agency needs to deal with the parking issue for the entire system on the Southline. It is unfortunate that a lot of money was spent on the new Tukwila train station with very little new parking spaces made available overall. this lot just opened and the parking lot is full before the last train leave into Seattle. If one of the options in dealing with parking means having some spots that commuters could pay a monthly fee to reserve I am all for it. It would beat the daily stress of not knowing whether you will find a parking spot or not. Continuing to promote the Sounder to gain more riders without dealing with the issues the current riders are experiencing is extremely frustrating. Also the mechncal issues have become quite frequent and cause for more frustration. Please budget and plan for required maintenance for your trains to ensure reliable service.
1	As a working person, and an overtaxed one at that, I am tired of constantly having to pay extra in every direction to support

	those who choose not to work, but would rather get a cheap or free ride through life (no pun intended) on the backs of those who do work. Like Metro's idiotic idea of charging car owners an additional $60 per vehicle, per year to pay for the deadbeats who refused to pay. If Link and Metro enforced the ride fee on the deadbeats you would have that extra income, but in true Seattle fashion you are afraid to hurt their feelings by making them pay their share. Sending out warnings and letting nasty riders get by for free and then telling those who do pay they have to pony up to cover for them is infuriating. The old bumper sticker is truer today than ever, "work harder thousands on welfare are depending on you."
1	Public transit is the great equalizer - I think it is incredibly important for community members who do not own cars to be able to rely upon public transit for transportation as a social and economic justice issue. (I also generally believe in a robust public transit system for environmental reasons.) I hope that as part of its investigation, Sound Transit reviews how other major public transit systems across the country are able to finance reduced fare programs for low-income members of our communities. While I don't mind a small fare increase of $0.25, I wonder if there are other ways to raise revenue to finance a reduced fare program here. I would like to see Sound Transit maintain its routes and schedules as well.
1	We need equity throughout our transit systems, and I applaud and FULLY support Sound Transit in stepping up to take on this responsibility. For low income folks especially, home, work, school, childcare, and services are spread out throughout our cities and county. This Low Income Fare program would help people afford the necessary transportation that keeps their life in forward motion, as well as keeps congestion down on the roadways. A stronger, aligned transit system is VITAL to our larger community's health and wellness. Please take this step forward.
1	It is counter-intuitive and against the principle of applying a discounted fare for low-income adult riders if you then increase the fare for youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. These are some of the populations most affected by fares, and to increase their fare to provide a discount to, arguably, folks in the same situation seems unjust. I believe raising the rates for adult riders overall to compensate for providing a discount for low-income riders makes sense. It should be restricted to raising rates to adult riders only, even if that means the rate would be .50.
1	Sound Transit should consider raising the regular fare to an even dollar amount (e.g. $3 or $4) to make cash payment easier and to raise a little but more revenue. Sound Transit provides premium services and should charge fares accordingly.
1	I ride the 574 daily. In the afternoon, the bus is standing room only and is always late. Why would I pay more for continued bad service like this? Work with what you have. That is what households do, they budget and work within that budget.
1	If it doesn't pay for itself it should be Ended. It has gotten totally out of control. If I drive a car and can't afford gas, I don't ask you to buy it for me. If someone decides to live on an island it is not the job of everyone else to provide ferry service. Enough is enough. Let us vote on it. We will vote to end it
1	I think the idea in general is find. How would income verification take place? On a completely different matter regarding student fares, why aren't college students included in a discounted fare? I think college age students up to 21-25 years old should be given a discount. Thank you.
1	If the fare change proposal drives the ridership up on Sounder so that there will be even more crowding, I would look for alternative means to get to work.
1	Downtown Seattle is not the only place people want to go. Particularly weekends and evenings, disadvantaged riders are trying to go places *other* than downtown shops, many of which are closed. Better use of regional transit centers, and more high speed links between the transit centers seem like they would provide more distributed network.
1	This proposed rate hike on the people who "can afford" it is UNFAIR. The rates are already high enough and to add additional fee to pay for those who supposedly cannot is UNFAIR. The additional rate hike may just be the tipping point causing some people to abandon public transit. Should we give low-income people cheaper gas? Or cheaper food? Or cheaper car insurance? No. All users of the system should pay the full fare. Period.
1	I am actually a care attendant for a disabled rider. When I occasionally ride by myself, I pay full fare and would not mind the $0.25 increase. I am concerned about extending that increase to the disabled and elderly rates though since many disabled and elderly riders are also low income and that extra quarter added to their discounted fares every ride would be a hardship. It makes no sense to help one group of low income riders by hurting another.
1	Raising fares will only cause lower ridership, which in turn lowers revenue. This plan will only backfire.
1	I don't agree with the fare change that has the full pay customer subsidizing the cost for low income. Low income persons

	already have access to wide array of state and federal programs outside Sound Transit that include public transportation subsidies. Sound transit could try a few more options. One, Sound Transit could try to work with those agencies regarding low income subsidies, rather than just raising cost to the middle income. Two, Sound Transit could look at inefficiencies within its current routes, vehicle and facilities energy use to off set these costs. Three....
1	I spend $10.00+ per day traveling to and from work and no, my work does not cover the cost of my Orca card. This increase would put me at over $200 a month for a service that is, quite frankly, consistently inconsistent and unreliable. I know that I am not the only rider who won't qualify for a reduced fare, yet will still struggle with paying monthly travel expenses. I find it appalling that the altruistic, self-righteous indignation of some is being imposed on others. I do not have an abundance of extra income after bills are paid and what I do have left I want going to support my family, not those people who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances. As callous as that may sound, I absolutely do not agree that the burden should be put on other riders for the purpose of Sound Transit not reducing annual profit. Without delving into a political rant, which I find difficult considering the philanthropic purpose of this proposal, why should it be my responsibility to cover the costs of others when I myself am having to live frugally? If the City of Seattle or King County or Sound Transit want to help those who are low income then that is their prerogative. I already have a significant portion of my paycheck taken by the government to assist low income families and government programs. The intentions of those involved in this plan may be noble, but there will be plenty of people who won't qualify for reduced fare and will still be negatively impacted by this change. Therefore, I vehemently disagree with this proposal.
1	Service should not be based on income. Other forms of transportation are not subsidized by those who earn more.
1	Charging more while for a fare, while providing less service in the way of inadequate parking and fewer bus routes is an unfair practice. Provide better, and the fare might by justified.
1	What are the statistics of low-income people riding Sound Transit? Personally, I think this is another way for Sound Transit to increase revenue while making it sound like they are doing something beneficent.
1	If Metro wants to make this change, I see no reason for Sound Transit to fall in lockstep. Sound Transit should keep their fares the same and if King County wants to subsidize them, it should be applied externally in the form of a discounted pass.
1	ST should help make ORCA ubiquitous and easy to acquire and use. ST should also help speed bus fare collection in the DSTT.
1	The youth fare should not be raised. There are youths out there who barely have the money to take the bus, sometimes even their loose change isn't enough. Bussing is a mode of transportation to a lot of people to get to work or school. Essentially, why should we pay MORE to get to school? We're already paying for college educations and going to work to pay the bills. We shouldn't have to worry about the money we could've saved over time because of the fare increase. Even when those youths turn 19 and start paying adult fares, what about the students who dorm and hardly have money to buy food let alone bus it to wherever they need to go?
1	Now that there will be distinct cash and ORCA fares for low-income ORCA-holders -- namely the low-income fare when paying with ORCA product, and the full adult fare when paying with cash -- this would be the appropriate time to raise the cash fares on ST Express even higher, to an even $3 for one-county and $4 for two-county trips. The savings from even less cash fumbling should help offset the lost fare revenue from honoring the low-income ORCAs. Also, consider whether it would bring in just as much revenue to have a flat fare of $2.75 on Link. Whatever Link's fare is, it ideally ought not be higher than the fare for a Metro bus doing the same trip. Consider also that the distance-based fare system can easily be defeated by getting off and back on at Rainier Beach Station. The current situation with Sounder fares is that they incentive riders to choose ST Express or Metro for several of the trips done by Sounder. If ST wants riders to choose Sounder over ST Express, it should move the fares for each service to at least parity, if not charging more for ST Express than for Sounder.
1	I could not answer questions 5 or 6 because I could not find any information to determine what measures are being used to determine what is considered "Low Income" except for a family of four with an annual income of $47,700 or less. What about a single person? What is the measure being used to determine the annual salary to qualify for "Low Income"? I have no choice but to continue riding Sound Transit because my current employer will not pay for such. I commute from Everett to Ballard and find it frustrating that I need to travel all the way south in order to travel north to Ballard? There is not enough buses for the 510 route and frequently having to stand throughout the commute is straining to say the least. As a result of the way the 510 is routed I would not be able to attend the meetings. I leave work at 4:30pm from Ballard / Fisherman's Terminal and arrive home in South Everett by 6:30pm; if not later if I don't make the 29 South (Everett Transit) connection. Please let me know about the salary measures being used to determine Low Income for a single person. Thank you for your time and consideration, Ixchel Recio

1	Instead of increasing the fares for those who pay every day going to work why don't you just raise the cost of trips to the stadiums on game days. Those of us who ride public transportation every day should not be punished because we make a living above the poverty line.
1	I understand that some people have no other option than public transportation. But if you're already cutting bus lines for lack of money do you really think discounting so more drug addicts make their connection is really the way to go? Maybe discount .50 but not $1.50. I don't think that its fair
1	Raising fares is not necessary and will create a larger burden on those of us who live paycheck to paycheck, just trying to feed our families. Not all of us are under the federal income limits, but that doesn't mean we're not stretched thin as it is.
1	Transportation is one of the basis needs for our low income single adults and families. I think it is right up there with housing, food and utilities. Low income transportation also make's the city and county more accessible too!
1	I do not believe that the purpose of mass transit is to provide a subsidized ride to people who are low-income. I do believe that the disabled, children, and elderly deserve a discount, because they do not always have the ABILITY to get a ride a different way. One of the main purposes of mass transit is getting people out of their cars, reducing traffic, and reducing environmental impact of commutes. Raising fares on "average" riders is a terrible way of doing this. Average riders - those above the low income level - are the ones getting in their cars every day to go to work. This proposal will be a great way to run Sound Transit into the ground, just like Pierce Transit which currently serves no purpose other than a low income shuttle for the unemployed who have no means of transportation and all the time in the world to wait 150 minutes for the next bus, since the 5 buses that should come in between have all been cancelled for budget cuts.
1	My doctor is in Seattle, and I live in Tacoma. It is cheaper to take the bus than drive. Right now with my husband being unemployed we are living off of right around $1400 at most a month. In the case where we have to come to Seattle much it can quickly deplete our Orca card, and thinks going by income for what a person pays would be a smart thing. We love the Sounder train in the evening but that is expensive even if it is a lot quicker since the buses are standing room only, and with my Disability I cannot stand even though many times no one makes anyone move so I can get a seat.
1	While I recognize the general thought process behind offering discounted fares for low-income individuals, as well as keeping things neat across county lines of services, I don't think other riders should have to bare the cost of this program to others. Especially single people like myself, who don't qualify as "low-income" but are having a hard enough time scrapping by as it is, raising the fares only starts to hurt us more. A regular rider is now paying an extra $20 a month, or $240 more a year, and that digs into the savings of even taking the bus in the first place to save on gas. Increasing the fare to supplement other riders is only opening a door to further increases. If a significant portion of regular riders starts to use this program, then the scales will only become more unbalanced as transit services start losing profitability. Like our tax system, soon 10% of us will be supporting 90% of everyone else. I only support fare increases that provide beneficial service upgrades for everyone involved, not just one type of party.
1	This should also include people without family of 4 that live may live alone but are in poverty level or below.
1	This would help low income people get and retain jobs since they would be able to use more money towards their household bills. It would also encourage more low income people to use public transportation to lower their monthly gas bill and in the end I believe help sound transit generate higher revenue.
1	What's to stop non-qualified people from buying the low-income fare? The vending machines and transit fare enforcement officers won't have any way to know who's eligible to use the low-income fare tickets. I think that by offering this lower-priced ticket option (particularly if combined with an increase for everyone else), you're going to see a shift to many people buying the low-income tickets, which will likely then lead to a loss of revenue overall for the Light Link system.
1	Since Seattle housing and living expenses are sky-rocketing and low-income people are being forced into moving outside of the Seattle City limits, it is very important that they be able to afford to stay at the jobs they have. Moving outside the city increases fares from in-town rates ($4-5 round trip) to out-of-zone rates ($7-10 round trip) For the purposes of building credit and a strong work history, it is important that people be able to keep their jobs without needing to find jobs closer to their new homes. They are already spending at least 2 hours on transit (I commute to the International District from Ash Way in Bothell), which is time lost in potential family time or work hours. It only seems fair to offset the cost of bus fares to help them have an equal chance of getting and maintaining employment even if they can't afford to live inside Seattle.
1	Low-income senior/disabled fares should remain the same, or even be reduced by .25 I used Sound Transit to ride from

	Pierce Transit to King County Metro to be civically engaged, attend appointments etc. I cannot afford more than the $6-$10 per month I currently budget for this. Even though it is difficult to board the buses with the steep stairs and tight turns, it is more affordable than the Sounder and the only option most weekends. Right now, $6 buys 8 trips, or four round trips. Increasing the fares would reduce one of my trips per month. Which day of meetings would you like me to skip? Reducing fares by .25 for low income senior/disabled would add one trip per month. Please consider that incomes for us range from 0-1,000 per month for most, with over 80% of our income often going to housing due to affordable housing shortages. Increasing fares would lead to increased isolation as many would then be homebound. Many are unable to drive, cannot afford cars-for-hire, and are often limited in ride options with medical mobility equipment. As our work and social activities are already so few, we really need to get out. Please consider our plight when you make your decision. Please do not raise fares for low-income senior/disabled. Thank you.
1	Reduce youth fairs for same low-income families. Make it easy for qualified riders to obtain low-income ORCA. For example many low-income families may not have the ability to visit the appropriate offices during M-F working hours. Need an outreach program.
1	Perhaps better allocation of tax funds to supplement the low income. I don't see why I have to pay more because I am working two jobs to provide for my family. Let's look at where our tax money is being lost.... I observe people abusing our social support frequently and really despise it being blatantly allowed. So until the abusers of social substities are reeled in, and high income tax evaders are playing by the same rules as everyone else - then NO. DO NOT INCREASE THE fares of the middle class person. (the rich don't ride public transit.... so once again the middle class citizen is penalized.) Thank you for this opportunity to share thoughts. I mean no disrespect. I do believe in fare and square EQUALITY. Lisa
1	Overall I believe that there ought to be a lower fare, but raising fares for others creates something of a dilemma for other riders. You have to imagine that many riders already have a diminished ability to say, own a vehicle, and therefore take public transportation. This is a little along the ideas of raising sales tax in order to fund low income housing--it hurts the people it ought to be protecting.
1	Please consider equity in your decision making. Many low income households are people of color who also rely on public transportation.
1	A low income fare should only be implemented if Sound Transit charges a surcharge for all riders that pay cash, a surcharge at least $0.25 above the increased regular fare, rounded up to the nearest whole dollar. If I am to subsidize low income riders, riders that waste my time by slowing the boarding process should pay a surcharge - otherwise I oppose any low income fare. I'm willing to pay more, but only if there is an improvement in efficiency. The cash surcharge should be instituted prior to or concurrently with the low income fare program.
1	I agree with adding in a lower-income fare for metro buses & possibly the light rail in king county but I believe the sounder should be left out of both sides of that. The fares are already the highest and I don't believe that we need to implement a low-income price for adults for the Sounder trains when there are already Metro buses that could accommodate those rate changes.
1	This proposal is somekind of Robin Hood plan. Instead of thinking ways to increase fare to increase revenue, how about thinkin ways to improve service to gain customers? Everyday there are tons of cars heading up I-5 to Seattle in the morning, and heading south in the afternoon. I see them as potential customers. I don't think these people enjoy driving that road at all, but why are they not taking the Sounder? Or other means of public transportation? I know people would love to hop on the train at Puyallup and Sumner, but parking in those postage-stamp-sized lots has always been an issue. Now a special permit needed to park in those lots. Are you not driving away your customers?! How about building a parking garage for those places? For the link light rail, that politically-correct route is an absolute joke, it winds through the neighborhoods that no one really cares about. For most of us, we just want to get from point A to point B fast. Looking at the transit system map of Seattle and New York, it's not difficult to see the transit system of Seattle is a tangled-up mess. In Manhattan, there is subway running north and south, and the metro bus handles east-west travel, simple & efficient. Now why can't we do that? And now not only we are paying thru tax, but increased fare as well. The daily fare now are pretty much equivalent of the gas money if one was to drive alone, so what's the incentive of using public transportation, much less paying for one that doesn't work? Get it together people! We have a transportation system compares to that of a third-world country.
1	Help people, and the companies that they work for understand the benefit of using Sound Transit to work. I was working for a major Rental Car Company, management above my supervisor cleared my use of the Bus, but he decided that I was not to use the bus.
1	Just like public schools, parks, the fire department, and the police, transit should be a fully subsidized public service. But as I

	don't see that happening soon I can at least support a discounted low income fare. The problem is I have trouble being able to support raising the fares for everyone else.
1	I think that the money should be found elsewhere as most people who ride the bus in general are low income.
1	To put a 33% increase on seniors to pay for "low income adults" is a burden that most seniors, particularly those of us living essentially on Social Security only, will find onerous. It would definitely reduce my frequency of use, thus totally negating any increase in income to the agency. Simplify things for seniors if you do this, allow a $1.50 all-day pass for seniors using ORCA cards.
1	They already get a discounted fare with Metro Transit. Why should we subsidize them with another discount? Also, fuel prices are down across the board. Those savings should be used for subsidizing any discounts before raising rates for everybody else.
1	Although the idea is good to provide transportation services to lower income, my fear is, like other programs, it will be abused. There is entirely to many people using these services and do not really need them because they have acquired the card from another person who does qualify for the service and doesn't use it. I am opposed to raising the fare. I have to ride the bus to and from work daily and some weekends, if I had other options, I may take advantage of those. Thank you for your attention.
1	I ride the Sounder train daily, however, am becoming quite disappointed as it seems there are always delays or cancellations due to mechanical issues. I have been taking Metro to work in the mornings, as the train is standing room only and this is at 6 AM. I do take the train home at night but have been stuck many times waiting for an extremely long time or ending up taking the bus home too. As far as a fare increase, most employers pay for or assist in paying transit fees. Very frustrating!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
1	As a long time Sounder comuter I would be very upset if you raise the rates on the Sounder as over the last year or so the service has gotten worse and worse. The delays and cancelations have made it much harder to ride the train.
1	I use sound transit for several reasons, the biggest being that it is cheaper than driving and I can help the environment. If fares go up, especially for a reason such as this, then I will be less inclined to ride. If fares are raised, fewer people will ride transit, which will result in lost revenue. Would the increased fare offset this loss? Maybe. But, you would put more cars on the road, causing worse traffic, and causing further pollution. As fares go up, fewer people ride. Which then necessitates more fare increases, Etc. It becomes a cycle. Fares are already quite high. I strongly encourage leaving fares at their current level.
1	I can only assume that the votes against the Metro funding increase came from persons with other options. Increasing fares, cutting routes, and decreasing service frequency WILL affect those without options as well. A plan to reclaim "NO" voters as Metro riders should include making commuter routes faster. Give them a reason to regret their "NO" vote. I'll give an example: I ride the #8 bus from 1st Ave N and Denny Way to Capitol Hill (a short ride). During peak hours I can walk it in half the time it takes cars and Metro buses. A RELIABLY fast route through bottlenecks such as this would get my attention. What if the bus took a route avoiding the bottleneck during peak hours (1st to Stewart on Denny Way)? Neighboring streets, restricted lanes, tunnels...
1	It is unclear why the fare would increase for seniors and people with disabilities. Their fares should remain the same and I don't see that as an option.
1	I think it's ridiculous to further charge people on fixed incomes when there are many that take the Sound Transit system that pay no parking for park and rides , the East Gate Parking garage usually has students parked there as well as people that work corporate jobs that don t want their car dirty. I realize they ,meaning the working public say they foot the bill too often for the "freeloading disables that do not work". To date the middle class have foot the tax bill for the past 45 years, read the charts and some of us teachers, that worked 32 years got in some medical problems due to our Low stress jobs and wound up on fixed incomes. Meanwhile , we have foot the tax bills, paid the highest taxes until many just got tired of it. Soooooo, how much in tax do the people that make over $70,000 make a year and do people listen to them, of course. I think that Sound Transit is making a big mistake even considering charging higher rates to those that are on fixed incomes, because they a can't even catch up with inflation , and guess what , they don't want to be on fixed incomes in the first place. I can comfortably tell you that your idea of fare hikes are not fair hikes.
1	Regardless of a discount fare for low-income riders, Sound Transit should increase fares for all passengers on all modes (link light rail, ST Express and Sounder). The current ST Express $2.50 fare from Seattle to Federal Way is too cheap. I would gladly pay $3-$3.50/trip if ST would add larger-capacity buses (articluated buses) especially during peak time. Weekdays from 2:00pm on ST 577/578 are PACKED beyond standing room only. The buses frequently cannot pick-up us or the wheelchair rider because they are beyond full. Pls do something!

1	I spend approximately 10 days per year in the Sound Transit service area, and use public transit exclusively during those visits. Prior to October 2013, I lived / worked in Seattle and Bellevue for 16 years, and used public transit for all commuting and most leisure activities. I strongly believe in social justice, and support efforts to make the Puget Sound area survivable, if not affordable, for those living on the economic margins. IMO, fares should be increased on all services to support this initiative, but Sounder should not be discounted due to its high operational costs.
1	In light of recent events in which King County Metro's revenue estimates have dramatically shifted, this is a bad time to mimic its fare policies. Inequality is a serious problem in this region, but other state, county and city governments are better positioned to address it because they have a broader array of tools than a transit agency, which has only fare policy to change. Lastly, reduced-fare policies are vulnerable to fraud, and ST fare enforcement is nonexistent in my experience.
1	As a bus driver I see so many people that already do not pay. We are taught to not get into any fare disputes so many times I let people on my bus for free rather I like it or not. I'M also a rider who has gone out of her way to ensure that I have proper fare or money on my orca card and I do not want to pay more for those who already do not pay. So I'm wondering if there is a fare change based on income will we stop letting people who are 'short' or have no money at all for bus fare ride and if so how would sound transit implement this change on the bus especially so that drivers are not getting into fare disputes and spit on or harmed when someone is upset that they can not ride?
1	The discounted fares should also apply to seniors and those with disabilities. Although they may not always fall into low income categories there are a lot who are very close.
1	If you raise fares, it will negatively impact those whose budgets are pushed to the limit. I am a single parent, and I live paycheck to paycheck. I do not qualify for the reduced fare, and increasing my fare will mean I must take money out of another area of my budget. Should I take food out of my children's mouths? Should I stop paying my electric or phone bill in order to pay the increased fare? I am in favor of the reduced fares for low income people, but please do NOT increase fares for everyone else.
1	If the working poor earn enough not to be part of the low-income fare program, then a policy which raises general fares in order to subsidize the fares of those who do not work penalizes the working poor unnecessarily. Frankly any decision to subsidize fares of the poor should be paid from general tax revenues, not from raising fares on riders. My taxes toward Sound Transit are to fund a transit system, not another income redistribution program. Continuing to raise general fares makes transit less attractive for all riders and I will resist future Sound Transit tax votes if it becomes a welfare program instead of a transit program. Why create any artificial barriers toward ridership? Further, Sound Transit and Metro should align their fares for all bus and light rail service so that the same journey carries the same price regardless of which vehicle is used. It's crazy to be standing at the stop and the fare varies based on which bus comes first.
1	Sound Transit is not a social service organization-you are a bus company, not a charity! Don't reinforce low achievers. Keep a standard rider fee for all. That will encourage the low achievers to take some initiative to find work at their level to acquire income to pay for their bus service. I have Masters degrees in Special Education, School Psychology and an MBA. (Yes--3, hard earned and with personal sacrifices!) I understand the psychology of this. You need to provide an incentive, not a band aid for the low income people.
1	I have a disabled orca card and feel you should not raise fare for those riders as metro is not raising disabled fare. If you did raise the disabled reduced fare I would no longer want to ride sound transit as you have akready raised the fare for me to pay a quarter more even with the pass being loaded at the $27.00 monthly pass.
1	Think the cost recovery should come from a review of employee compensation and benefits. Seems these do not align with your average worker and the average worker should not have to continue to pay increased fares when comp and benefits for government workers is out of line with your every day citizen. Find redundancies and eliminate them rather than simply raise fares.
1	As someone who pays roughly $150 a month using e-purse for using SoundTransit 5 days a week, I would immediately end using your service and would stop paying any further money to Sound Transit if asked to personally subsidize low incomes riders and would go back to driving my car. Why should I be forced to work extra hours at my job to pay more money so someone else can use your service? I have to pay an extra $130 a year in extra fare so someone else can use your service? This makes no sense to me. At what point did communists take over Soundtransit?
1	I think it's important to provide a discounted fare for low-income adult riders. For many, it is their only means of transportation to work and when you are trying to make ends meet on a low income, every small discount helps. I can't say I'm excited for my fare to go up 25 cents, but I've been unemployed before and know how difficult it is to pay transportation costs.

1	I barely make more than to qualify for the discounted fare. I might make a little more a year, but take out my living expenses and paying off student loan debt and I'm struggling to survive. I DON'T think there should be a fare increase to allow low income families to pay less, I think that you should get a grant or donation if you want to start a program like this. The Sound Transit fares are high enough already, I don't think we should be raising ANY fares especially while gas prices are starting to drop. Furthermore, all the buses I take are packed every day, I don't understand why you'd want to raise the prices and possibly lose more commuters like myself. But what choice do I have?! I can't afford to buy a car and I guess you can just rape me on your fares since I fall into some grey zone where I'll have to pay more even though I'm always broke. Maybe if you actually gave out transfers so the poor saps who aren't smart enough to realize they need an ORCA card to not pay over $5 to get around using more than one bus service then I might understand a 25 cent increase. Either way this topic just makes my blood boil, obviously.
1	If Sound Transit wishes to implement changes in fare structure to assist with low-income families, that is a business decision they should base on their financial position without charging other riders more to offset costs. That smacks of a socialist perspective and does not align with a free-market society which is better for the economy and its people.
1	I work hard for my money, just as hard as those who would qualify for the proposed fair discount. Just because I make more money doesn't mean I should have to pay more for them. If you want to offer a discount figure out a different way to do it.
1	The poor already get enough freebies. I already pay enough in taxes for these types of things. Employers should be doing more to help these types of riders.
1	How about accepting advertising on the trains (inside and out) to add revenue? It would be wonderful if there was a late evening train - 8 or 9 or 10 pm - in case you have to work late or stay in the city to have dinner. Or at least one evening bus service that connects to the Sounder stations (There is no bus service that gets you back to the Tukwila Sounder station if you miss the 612 train). The Sounder is a wonderful service, an outstanding commuting option, and thank you for all your hard work.
1	With my small income of 65k / yr to support 6 people (wife and kids) I don't believe I should subsidize someone else's commuting cost. I do contribute thousands of dollars a year to charities on my choice amd would prefer not to deviate from that course.
1	For a daily Sounder rider, this fare increase would equate to approximately $130 in added fares per year. The Sounder is already fairly expensive. Please don't burden us with this increase.
1	My assumption is that most low income adults are unable to ride the various transportation options since the fares are too expensive for them. If this is accurate and current capacity allows for the additional load added by the new low income riders then the total revenue to Sound Transit would still increase overall and a blanket fare increase under the guise of the low income discount may not be warranted.
1	Many of the low income people are seniors and disabled and already have a reduced fare rate. Oftentimes, they are taking "Access Buses" at a reduced fare. We, as workers, are encouraged to take Mass Transit, which by the way does not have an overall vision of connections and timeliness for the working folk, who once again would be penalized by increased rates. I am originally from New York, where Mass Transit, actually had a vision and made it work. Trains and bus schedules actually match up. In this state, you are running to catch a bus, and the driver takes off! I see it 5 days of the week. I work at VAPSHC on Beacon Hill, commuting from Tacoma. To get to work in the early morning, I take Sound Transit Bus 590 to Lander; then light rail to Beacon Hill; then 36 to get there! It seems rather convoluted to me! Why not have a light rail from Tacoma to Beacon Hill?
1	I already pay a lot to ride Sound Transit, so it would become cost prohibitive if the price goes up any more. I see people riding free all of the time, and I pay my fare share.
1	They can walk, I work my bum off to pay taxes for a transit service that I will never use because the nearest station is five miles away. I live on the boarder of Kent/Covington.
1	I live in Everett and I commute every day, both ways, to and from Seattle for work using the 510 ST Express route. Despite being solidly lower-middle-class, between rent, living expenses, and repaying student loans, raising the fare would make things extremely difficult for me. I would not be able to afford getting to work. I'm sure that other people in my income bracket ($24,000 after taxes) feel the same way - I can barely afford paying $7.00 a day, it's almost the exact same cost as driving a gas-efficient car to work. I am all for people living below the poverty level getting more resources, but I can't afford the change

	myself and no support would be offered for me if this change was made.
1	It depends on whether and where low-income adults use Sound Transit service. ST should really consider for adults who commute with ST daily and regularly. It should not raise bus fare since we need to use it daily. ST should not raise adult fare since we are the real commuters . Raising the bus fare would definitely pose a burden on adult commuters who are not that well-off but better-off than the low-income adults...Please reconsider this fare change proposal.
1	We need to raise the fare for people paying with cash. There needs to be a cash surcharge. Why is this not an option? Cash payers slow the system and should be phased out. Everyone should have a monetary incentive to use ORCA cards. I don't see why doing a low income fare on only one type of service is an option. Low income riders use all types of service. If you only make one type of service allow low income fares you sully that type of service with the idea that it's full of poor people. The low income fare needs to be universal - even available on ferries (yes, I know you don't control that). The fare should not be raised by an easy number to pay with cash. Raise the fare by 22 cents or 27 cents, whatever achieves the amount of fare box recovery you are actually shooting for. Throw off the shackles of the cash society, embrace the ORCA card, it's five years old for pete's sake.
1	Its hard to make sure that I have enough money on my orca card when I have to work in Seattle. I only work seasonal jobs in Seattle. Either way I have no choice to take sound transit from Tacoma to Seattle and back.
1	Sounder especially is quite expensive! I think low income workers in the green river valley would benefit greatly from a reduced fare on the sounder!
1	Well since there is a problem with people paying the correct fare I think money should be spend on fare enforcement. (I see it all the time)
1	It would help poor people like me get to our jobs. I have to pay 3:50 to get to my job and then another 3:50 to get back. It really add's up along with all my other bills.
1	People that are low-income are force to take busses only, or sneak on to other forms of transportation I think that lowering the fare would make it so that we not only have other options but there may be less trying to ride for free.
1	It benefits everyone if more people ride transit, which they won't do if it gets even more expensive- it's already one of the highest in the country. Low income people are already being given a cheaper than a car option just by transit existing, they shouldn't get even more of a discount if it means penalizing everyone else. The transit is for everyone.
1	I want to be treated as an equal. I shouldn't have to pay less or more than the person next to me for the same service they are getting. That's unfair for other people.
1	I am not low income myself. However, I worked for many years as a social worker with families throughout King County and became very aware of the financial hardships suffered by many families in our area. Affordable transportation was a serious issue for many families.
1	I already pay enough for low income people. If the fare goes any higher it will not be cost effective to ride so I will be forced off the bus to pay for reduced fare riders. Maybe you should concentrate on the riders who actually pay the fares or you could end up like Metro.
1	Much of the "poor" population in King County do not own vehicles, public transit is the "lifeline" to employment, healthcare, shopping and social services...are we really striving for a diverse population in King County and western Washington, or one consisting of only the rich and economically blessed?
1	If there is a fare increase and low-income discount, Sound Transit needs to makes sure that all riders share in the cost. It also needs to make sure that there are enough buses so that all passengers have a seat on the bus and that they are not FULL half way through the route at prime times (5 PM).
1	General concerns regarding availability of seats on already crowded buses. 577 moves to smaller buses too early.
1	I would support increasing fare cost even more, as long as low-income families can easily get the special ORCA card.
1	I feel that if bus fare continue to rise, it will get to the point that it will not be much savings for me to ride them. As is my commute takes more than double the time it would be for me to drive. It cost benefit start to go away, I would not have much incentive to continue riding bus.

1	It is hard for me to agree to a fare increase as the service on Sound Transit is not efficient. The morning trains are always late or cancelled. Passengers would not mind paying increased fares for good service but the current service on the sounder trains leaves much to be desired. Sounder needs to improve their service, try being on time, before proposing any fare increase.
1	I would support a fare increase if it meant that there would be better service, but I do not like the idea of paying more so others could pay less. Public transportation is relatively cheap already and Sound Transit is a unique service that is worth paying a little more for.
1	I am young adult who commutes downtown everyday for work, and uses public transit as my main transportation because I don't have a car. Although I have a job, I do not make a lot of money, and honestly, most of the time I pay a youth fee because I can't afford to pay an adult price and I haven't gotten an orca card for that reason. I am sure I'm not the only adult who can get away with paying a youth fee. People are already doing it anyways, mind as well make a thing. Thanks ST!
1	If people have the freedom to move it is better for our entire region. Human movement equals communication and communication means commerce and commerce means prosperity for everybody. We need more people on transit and we need more transit. Public transit for everybody is very important for everybody.
1	I ride metro and community transit daily and occasionally use sound transit if commuting further than my job in Everett from Shoreline. I use sound transit when I go to Tacoma from the Mountlake Terrace transit center. I realized I may not have a popular opinion here, but I do not mind paying 25 cents more for good service. It's still more economical than paying for gas, auto insurance and usually a car payment. Because I put a $3.00 monthly pass on my card, I always add $10.00 e purse to cover the times I ride Sound Transit. I do not own a vehicle and prefer not to, so public transportation is my only means to get to my destinations. I only wish Seattle would improve their transportation system with more frequent trips, especially for people who occasionally have to work weekends and evenings (like myself). An hour between trips on the weekends is not good enough.
1	Change prices to reflect distance traveled. The farther you go the more it costs. Increase link light rail fair to the airport.
1	I believe that if a lower cost option is provided, maybe the fares on the weekend could have an increased rate of +25 but not during the week day. .... Or there be more of an incentive to monthly passes otherwise there is a price increase outside of monthly renewals on orca cards.
1	I do not support this initiative to lower fare for low income riders. Aside from the reduced fares, Sound Transit will have to vamp up the work force and invest money to regulate and monitor the qualifications of these low income riders. I believe there are still plenty of other opportunities where Sound Transit can improve such as more parking, more routes and update the vehicle fleet. Why not spend the money to make the system even better so the workforce can rely on for their commute which in turn will boost our economy.
1	I strongly disagree with raising fairs for regular income adult riders for ANY public transportation. I ride the Sounder, Link light rail and ST busses on a daily basis and it is already extremely expensive. Even though I do not qualify for reduce fair, it is still very expensive already. Even 25 cents a day adds up very quickly. I already pay almost $2,000 a year in public transportation. That is WAY too much if you ask me. Please do not raise fairs for other riders. Not all of us are lucky enough to have our employer cover our transportation costs.
1	Subsidized fare for some riders by other riders is socialism. If I wanted to live under socialism I'd live in Europe.
1	Fares have not increased in the five years I have utilized the Sounder train, and I am not averse to an increase to help those who may not be able to afford this. We are all in this together.
1	I am concerned as to how the Identification would work. Would there be EBT ID? Or would a completely new ID be required? Who would bear the cost for that network (State, Local, ST)? Although I am not opposed and am in agreement that something needs to done - I am afraid this will increase casual riders and vagrants. This is not easy situation to administer and there are repercussions.
1	At a time when the talk is of significant reductions in service levels, talk of reducing fares to any class of customers is insanity! It is truly unfortunate that no one with a lick of common sense is involved in the decision making at King County or in Seattle -- or on the Sound Transit Board. Until the transit agencies have strong fiscal policies in place to safeguard the financial integrity of the agencies, there should be no talk of anything like this taking place. But I'm not worried -- the idiots running Metro and Sound Transit are going to do this anyway!

1	Rignt now I'm paying $ 3.75 each way for a total of $7.50 per day. Just one way is the same price of a gallon of gas. The four of us that ride the train in each day will all chip in the price of a one way ticket ($3.75) each week which is more than enough for my car to drive in everyday. Parking for me is free. Do you really want more traffic on the freeways? Do you want the lost of riders? You already have pay for parking cheaters at the Sumner station. Do you really think we're going to pay for parking and a fare raise???? I don't think so! If you want to raise prices do it on the light rail or bus, we already pay more for the Sounder now.
1	I am not in disagreement because I don't want people to get help; I just don't think I should have to pay for it. If you are going to build something for the public use, then you should make it affordable for the public to use it. You might also take into consideration the other factors involved - like parking. There is already no parking in Sumner, Auburn, and Kent and now you want to make it easier for more people to ride it. If I knew my extra $.25 would go to additional parking, then maybe I would be more apt to vote for it. You can't put a square peg into a round hole - - you need to make the adjustments where necessary.
1	>I don't disagree with a fare change. >However, I disagree for the reasons why ST is considering this fare hike. It is not fair for the majority of riders to be burdened with a higher fare for the sake of the fewer riders. >If ST wants to align fares with Metro, I'm all for it. However, align ALL fares with Metro - not just the reduced one. >ST must become more progressive and creative with its fare structure rather than merely hiking fares. >Consider eliminating zonal fares and implementing peak fares. Currently ST charges riders $2.50 to travel from Federal Way to Seattle, but $3.50 from Mountlake Terrace to the University District. Likewise for riders from Tacoma to Federal Way it costs $3.50, but $2.50 for riders from Everett to Mountlake Terrace.
1	I think that it is a great idea if it is offered to low income adults in all counties that have Sound Transit, so that those living in Snohomish and Pierce counties can participate. If it isn't offered to all counties, than only King counties fair should be raised. If this is open to all counties with Sound Transit, than you need to rethink how low income adults in counties outside of King apply for the Orca card. They are low income and not likely to travel to King county to apply for an Orca card. Consider allowing low income adults to apply for the discounted Orca card the same way everyone else does--via online, mail, or phone using their latest tax return as proof of eligibility.
1	I do not support fare increases to support low-income fares. The money for low-income fares should come from other government sources the support low income people. I don't feel that I should have to pay more just so others can pay less. There are too many people who abuse the system as it is.
1	You could get more riders if you had more comprehensive coverage. It's just too long to take the bus--I don't have enough time for an hour bus ride from a specific part of Bellevue to Kirkland. I think I might pay more for a bus if it fit my needs, but it rarely does. Your proposal to increase rates is absurd...people who take the bus are often those who can't afford parking or a car, but that doesn't mean they qualify for low-income. If you subsidize, it should NOT be based on that standard, but at least 300% or 400% of poverty level. Even at that, you are taking from those who can barely afford to get by on their income. Rich people do not take the bus!! Especially in the Seattle area with such an inadequate bus service.
1	Sounder Train: A $5 one way commute is a steal from the taxing sources. There is free parking at the park and rides. I would think that a jump to $10 stepped over 2 years would be ok. All though for a rider boarding the either of the last 2 stops from the end (before the Amtrak or Lakewood Stations) could be maintained at $5 (let the computer programing figure it out). Tacoma Link: Usage is obviously heaviest from/to the Dome Station at the morning and evening, and the proposed rates are ok, but a flat rate for everyone the same. During the day, however, make it free (say 10am to 3pm), which will be a nice emotional boost to 1 to 2 station hopers, infrequent users, and tourists. Thank you and good luck with it all. Gary, Gig Harbor
1	The nature of the questions leading up to questions #7, #8, and#9 are prejudicial toward transit users and should not be collected concurrently with the opinion survey.
1	I would like to see some numbers supporting the balancing of fares. How was a 25 cent increase arrived at as the amount that would compensate for the discounted fare ridership? How many discounted riders are expected in comparison to full-price riders?
1	I think the cash fare to/from the airport should be at least $5 for adults unless thet have an ORCA card.
1	It's not fair that regular fare paying riders should shoulder the cost for low-income riders. If this can't be implemented without raising fares then the program should be reevaluated. Thank you.
1	Address overcrowded/late buses, and/or provide service improvements, before asking the majority of riders to pay more.
1	After the latest service cuts by King County metro, my trip to work from Redmond to Seattle now takes over 1 hr 20 mins vs

	previously just 25 mins. I only have an option of bus 545. If on top of that, I have to pay extra, I will not ride public transit at all and go back to driving my car. Stop squeezing it out of the riders. The more you do, the more people will abandon it and less revenue you'll have in the long run!
1	help with low income riders but don't penalize regular fare riders. I think also rider and driver safety and bus cleaniness may be come a concern on some routes.
1	I disagree with the gauge in use to qualify for discounted fares. Looking at annual income doesn't take into account number of people supported on that income, amount of discretionary income, etc. For that reason, I am not in favor of this idea. That said, if you do pursue it, I think it would be better to pursue corporate sponsors of the program much like sports booster teams use to offset costs of participation to some families. In addition, I teach at a YMCA whose majority of members are heavily subsidized. Our location is the dirtiest, most property-abused facility in the greater Seattle area. When people don't pay much, they don't take interest, appreciate or care of that which is given to them. There is no personal investment.
1	I currently pay more than I use. I am a state employee and pat around 44 bucks a month. I do this as a convenience. However, if this were to increase, you will no longer get 44 bucks a month. Instead, it will be more like 15 since I will stop getting my card and I will pay as I go and drive in to work and park on occasion with the extra savings.
1	Public transit is often the only option available for low income citizens. I strongly support subsidizing public transportation for these individuals. However, I believe that public tax revenues should pay for the large majority of transportation costs for all citizens and not rely on as much revenue from the fare box.
1	Raising the fare for people with disabilities and youth is counter productive to having a low-income fare. People with disabilities have fixed incomes and Sound Transit has already doubled this fare over the past few years. By increasing the fare for youth and people with disabilities you are making PUBLIC transportation even more inaccessible.
1	Have welfare subsidies to absorb cost increase for bus fares. Stop making incomes over $47, 000 pay the penalty for others who choose not to work.
1	This is the worst idea I have ever read. Do you have a bunch of Socialists running your board? Why should the people who ride everyday pay for the poor people? You need to think of more creative ways to pay for this idea. I hope this falls flat on its face.
1	It's not a good idea to keep increasing with the job market that we are in now. Low income does get social money already from the people like me who have a job and supporting two children. It is not fair to keep raising the fee to offset those who choose to live in the poverty line. Some people are pretending to be low income due to the insensitive they will get such as free meal for school children, $$ for food! And low income people tend to be a disruption. I can't believe you would allow people to ride with the working commuters. It will stink the cabins and will bring more chaos just like on Metro Busses.
1	Right now the cost of driving is significantly higher than the cost of riding the bus for me. The difference, though, for example, is just enough that the $3 Metro peak hour rate woukd take it to being less of an obvious choice. I highly doubt that the number of riders that would take advantage of the lower fare (which is a good idea) is more than the number of other riders such that an across the board fare increase is warranted. Can you provide data on the average number of riders per day you service and also how many riders you expect to take advantage of the lower fare? I feel that provide ding this data would help with my feelings on this matter.
1	While a noble idea, I'm not sure you have many routes that can handle a large influx of people. My route (510) is already chronically congested, to the point where people are left waiting at the Park and Ride. I hope you have plans to address that or else I would consider alternate transportation.
1	Request no additional fare increase for low income senior citizen. The bus route 250 has been cancelled in front of my house. I hope bus route 249 will not be cancelled.
1	Many people riding sound transit are already low income. The costs of riding should be subsidized by taxes and people driving cars, not by people with money making the responsible choice to ride public transportation.
1	Adjust fairs to improve infrastructure and service. Do not change fairs to put the burden on other riders.
1	I think this is an awesome idea. Transit needs to support low income households so they can get jobs and hopefully stop being low income households. If they don't have the ability to get to jobs that greatly limits their ability to earn a living.

1	How about implementing a fare increase for non-low income riders and keeping the fare for current low-income riders the same as it is now? People who use a service need to pay for it. Picking the pockets of the middle class and giving their money to low-income citizens is NOT the way to fund transit.
1	I would like to know how ST plans to fund the administration of this program. How often will the low-income riders have to re-apply for these benefits? As a rider out of the Everett Station, on a daily basis we have 10-30 people standing on the bus during the high commute times. With the reduced fair as an incentive, how will the number of buses increase to handle what is expected to be a higher ridership? Given the cost of a ride out of Everett Station, $3.50 reducing the fair to $1.50 and increasing the non low-income riders by only $0.25 seems very low given the cost to maintain the ST system. It also seems like a $1.50 across ST is too large of a cut given that the peak fare for Metro Buses is $3.00. I would expect that the reduced fare should be at a rate of 50% of the peak fare for ST buses and rail.
1	I sympathize with low-income families; however, with so many middle-class taxpayers already feeling the pinch of the current economy, I believe it's a bad time to increase fares across the board.
1	- For me personally, with current fares, financially driving to work and taking the light rail is the same. If the fares increase it doesn't make sense for me to use light rail anymore.
1	I work with many community members who have little to no income and have a hard time figuring out how to get to and from places throughout their days due to needing bus fare. Many people are trying to get jobs but when bus fares for interviews around the area add up it is hard to be consistent. I was very excited when King County Metro decided to pass the $1.50 low-income fare and I think it is imperative that Sound Transit do the same so there is coordination between our transportation systems and so that all community members have the best possible access to transportation. Thank you for your consideration of this fare change and know that I, along with many of those I work with, support this 100%!
1	I barely make ends meet now and don't qualify for "low income" benefits. I feel strongly against having to pay additional money (no matter how much increase is) so another group can get an advantage. I'm tired of having to pay more to help someone else get an opportunity or financial break.
1	These low income people already make more than most disabled adults whom many make around 710 a month. Rate increases hurt these individuals
1	Creating and sustaining a discounted fare for low-income adult riders would very positively affect the ability that these riders have to become and remain self-sustaining, working, productive members of society. It is a small change that would be a very big deal to many members of our own community.
1	Although I understand these low income individuals need to get around town as much as we do, but you're just moving the money around. I wouldn't necessarily mind poo saying more except by reducing fees for the lower income bracket, you also make buses slower and less efficient because you're letting anyone aboard. The reason I like sound transit is I am not afraid of something happening on one of these buses, even late at night I do not feel like I'll get mugged. I cannot say the same for king county transit. For king county transit is not for commuters, instead it's for everyone. So when I'm trying to get to work at you let several nonworking citizens on, it slows the whole process down. They are prepared with fare ready, often they are counting change to put in the machine. If you'd like to improve the bus lines, they should be made digital fares only. One should have to have an orca card to ride. There are enough rich flourishing companies around Seattle to be able to foot the bill to subsidize transportation cards for low income individuals in their neighborhoods. But ultimately making the fare lower for low income individuals only makes buses more crowded and screws over the working man. Our ride is now more crowded, more expensive, and slower. Why should I ride if you increase the fare?
1	We in the top 50% who are riding public transit can certainly pay a little more so those in the bottom 50% can save. That said, does it just further shift the break even point for driving instead of public transit (not for me, but it's getting close).
1	A .25 fare reduction would irritate riders and not save help low-income riders enough. 5 days/week x 2 rides/day x 50 weeks x .5 fare reductions is $250. Why create an atmosphere of discrimination for such a small amount?
1	Since my employer, which is the State of Washington, isn't subsidizing my ORCA card it is a lot to pay to go to Seattle everyday. I understand the need but I am barely making it myself but don't quite qualify.
1	The amount of income can be manipulated, and 100% accurate number cannot be assessed. The intention of the idea is good, but it does not make any sense.

1	I see that Sound Transit tends to raise their rates to match King County. Sound Transit does not offer transfers. As a passenger, one of the most noted things I see is that persons who regularly ride King County Metro ask about transfers. Did you consider that option?
1	It's already difficult for a lot of people who do not fall under the poverty line, to pay for transit. We all have issues with paying for transit or having to pay for gas to drive in and park where ever we work. If the fares continue to go up, and those of us that do not fit into the low-income fare have to subsidize for those who do fall under that category, you will find that ridership will go down even more. And you will lose a lot of repeat ridership.
1	should have mobile unit issue discount cards instead of having to go to King St. Building where METRO issues them.
1	I'm curious how you'll verify who qualifies for the discounted rate? A transit fare enforcement officer will have no way to know, and the vending machines certainly have no way to know. For a monthly pass, I could see making the low-income passes available only at certain offices and making people bring some sort of proof before they can purchase the pass. But otherwise, anyone could buy a low-income day pass at a vending machine and I don't see how there'd be any way to tell if they're legitimately using it or not. You run the very real risk that non-low-income riders will purchase the low-income fares (which will be especially tempting if you promptly raise the fares for everyone else) and you'll end up losing money in the process. I like the idea in theory, but I fear that in practice it'll be a losing proposition.
1	If this fare reduction is truly needed then if should be implemented but the financial impact of this change should not be the financial responsibility of the other riders. Any changes in the fare structure should reflect a desire to encourage mass transit usage. Increasing fares for the majority of users does not accomplish this goal. Transit should cheap to encourage ridership. A $1.50 for ALL riders would be step in the right direction.
1	Have thick skin and ignore any 'social engineering' criticisms. While it's not a yes/no question, the efficient and reliable urban mobility ST provides should be more of a right than it is now. It should not just be a privilege of the middle and upper class. Low-income fares make economic sense, and I'm willing to pay more myself to help make them happen.
1	Is King County Metro doing this too, or is it Sound Transit alone about implementing these proposed changes? I really see no compelling reason for this.
1	As a Sounder train commuter everyday, I would definitely argue against raising the fare. How about doing more fare enforcement? I can ride the train for months without ever being checked. I know for a fact that there are people riding every day without paying. You can identify them as they scurry when fare enforcement does show up. I would also argue that there probably aren't too many low income riding Sound Transit. Most are business commuters that, if they are honest, probably don't fit the requirements. I'm sure you could lie about your income and get away with it; after all, Sound Transit runs on govt money and no one will check.
1	I have no problem with offering low-income adult riders reduce fare as long as they are below the 200% of federal poverty level and raising other fares as long as every one is treated equal in other aspects such as: No Permit Parking at Sound Transit parking sites or park-n-rides. The raise in fares help improve Sound Transit servies and pay for bus drivers who really deserve it. Clara Stark Orting, Washington (360)872-0074
1	I am very much in favor of a Sound Transit reduced fare although I do not think senior and disabled riders should have their fair increased only adult and youth fares should increase.
1	Regardless if my employer pays my ORCA card it's the principle of the matter that one day it may get too high for them to pay and then they reverse it and start making me pay for my transportation. I make 2000 dollars more than the annual income and that would hurt me if I had to foot the bill. If you are going to raise fares the my wage needs to go up also. Why does my hard earned money have to go to lazy people who don't want to work but want to go places? I don't mind helping legitimate individuals that need the assistance but there are a lot of people that abuse the system. I'm tired of giving my money away for nothing in return. In this case it's not fair.
1	Instead of passing the cost of the low income adult fare on to the bus rider. Why dont you look within the company to see if there are any effecifies that can be made. also do you really need as many mangers as you have or superivors??? look within in the company 1st to see if you can cut cost. What happen to all that money when riders dont have the accuate change??? Over the years that must have come to a pretty penny??? dky
1	Raising the fares for everyone who doesn't quite meet the 200% below poverty line makes it extremely difficult for others who face poverty and/or are struggling to get to work/school/other needs via sound transit.

1	Discounted fares are one thing, but not when paid for buy other riders. With proposed increase in fare, proposed cost for permit parking and /or parking with shuttle service the cost is going up more than 0.25 for my area.
1	If discounting fares for low income makes it more affordable for them to go to work to keep their jobs AND increasing fares for everyone else means that the services won't get cut, I think that would be the solution for now. If the discount is opposed and the fares still go up and the low income people can't afford to take ST to go to work, there will be less riders which means there will be more cuts in services in the long run - this will have a negative impact on everyone. Especially people like me who need the trains and buses to keep their frequent schedules so I don't have to spend more than 1.5 hours for my commute! My choice to live in Spanaway and work in Seattle but having the public transportation work in my favor makes keeping my job easier.
1	I would like to see the fair sliding scale implemented. I think this is the next step in equal access and although I would not qualify to benefit from this the positives for folks that really need this is enough.
1	I am glad to see Sound Transit follow Metro in considering a low-income fare. The creation of a low-income fare will increase access for residents especially in the Rainier Valley where there is great LINK service but fares are often a barrier for choosing rail.
1	In order for me to justify paying more money to ride, I would expect better service. Sounder train service (which is what I ride) is often late and unreliable. I would not pay more for this inconvenience, in fact I would probably cut my losses and just drive for my commute, faster or the same amount of time to drive for my commute anyway.
1	Considering that Pierce Transit operates Sound Transit STS Express, I'd suggest that no reduction in fare occur in relation to other riders subsidizing the system with higher fares. In addition, with King County Metro's ill-conceived model to reduce fares and insist on subsidies from others, I suggest that Sound Transit review the existing agreement for operation of Link Light Rail to find a lower-cost of operations (drivers). King County Metro has bad timing. Just after making reductions in Metro bus service due to poor revenue performance, it seems ridiculous to ask riders to buy off on a model that is projected to deteriorate revenue even more. I think Sound Transit can do better. You have an opportunity to differentiate yourselves even more than ever before. Your STS Express buses and better equipped and more efficient that Metro. Link Light Rail maintenance and operating expenses should be more predictable and therefore better managed. And Sounder services remain an effective service to reduce congestion in the downtown corridor. One of the differences remains, Sound Transit offers service to passengers that can largely choose between driving or riding. Metro caters to a category of passenger that may not be able to make the choice. Please don't follow Metro on this fare scheme. It's not a good business decision.
1	Renegotiate corporate transit passes! It's very hard to hire young people these days without offering a transit pass. What's worse: $25 or $50 extra per employee, or not being able to attract college hires?
1	stop the income redistribution. we already have programs to supplement the income and assist with other expenses for low income individuals. another opportunity to cause me to pay for someone else's service is unreasonable.
1	There should not be any increase in price to college students who purchase their transit pass through their college/university. U-pass, etc...
1	This proposal just sounds like another opportunity to encourage fraud. How are you going to ensure that people really qualify and continue to qualify? What will keep people from applying for the Card and selling it to someone else? I'm already contributing to support "low income people" in every way I can imagine. Why have those on fixed incomes subsidize low income people? Just another step towards Socialism.
1	Sound Transit is not a charitable organization. You are a bus company. Don't subsidize riders' fares! They need incentive to do something to better their existence. I have Masters degrees in Special Ed., School Psychology and Business. (Yes, 3)!) I get this. You don't want to reward people for their lack of initiative in trying to better their lives. Do not change the fares!.
1	Transit fares are already heavily subsidized. No need to discriminate for or against a person's financial standing.
1	Reducing the cost for community transit for lower income residents may enable more lower-income residents to ride. However, this may create other issues. For example, less professional people who may not be as respectful to maintain the cleanliness and appearance of the community transit vehicles - leading to more maintenance and security costs.
1	Make an Orca card REQUIRED for discounted fares. Charge $2.00 for the card itself (discounted from $5), but don't make it free unless subsidized through another program that can prevent abuse. Please make CASH users pay a higher rate than

	Orca card purse to encourage all users to have Orca cards. It speeds boarding tremendously. It should be the norm and cash the exception. Please abolish paper transfers and require an Orca card.
1	Fares are currently low enough to be more affordable than private commuting options. Low income persons currently receive other benefits - lower federal taxes to name one. The public commuter field should be equal to all. If I board a full express bus, a low income person is not going to give up his seat to me. Why should I pay more than he? Equality for all commuters.
1	As a member of the working class poor, I am so tired of paying "just a little more" so others can have the same service as me...for less or free. Don't get me wrong I empathise with those that need assistance, but we make just a little too much to get any breaks, anywhere. I donate to charity and help those in need, but must I do that at the cost of 50cents per day..$2.50 a week, $130 annually, without a choice on my part? I commute so that I can get to work, so that I can earn a living to pay for my expenses and it offends me that I am now being asked pay for yet another program to assist others to pay less. If I didn't have to stand on the Link for the entire ride from Pioneer Square to Tukwila on an almost daily basis it may not frustrate me as much since it would feel like I am getting a seat for my fare, but I don't. I pay to ride but the Link schedule is spread just far enough out that I get to pay to stand....what would make you think I would want to pay more so that even more people can crowd onto the Link than currently does right now???
1	Personally, I don't see how this is going to benefit a lot of people. Sound Transit largely is a premium service that for those on more limited incomes there are alternates, and even than the price difference isn't so great that for only the most destitute (which I hate to say, I don't think you want on your buses or trains to begin with) would it have an impact. Furthermore, I think that most of these people who really need the discounted fare already qualify for an RRFP and that I think costs of qualification would outweigh the benefit and most likely the potential use. Finally and probably most importantly, while I feel that public transportation is a service that benefits everyone, fares should not be raised to benefit one particular class of user. Everyone has to pay their fair "fare". That being said, I do think keeping fares in-line with Metro on LINK light rail (assuming of course Metro and ST work together to eliminate duplication and improve transfers) would be beneficial to all riders. Eliminating the confusing distance based system, and switching to a zone or flat fare would benefit everyone, not just the low income rider. Finally, I have a feeling that such a program will be approved regardless of public input. the Political pressure from the Chairman/King County Exec, and the "advocates" for the low income is such a political hot tomato that this plan will carry forward. In that case I would ask that this program be limited to ORCA use only*, and only on LINK light rail and not the other more premium services *ORCA itself is a double edged sword for the agency and low-income riders. ORCA use reduces dwell time at the stops, cash handling by the passengers and the agency (saving money at the agency level -by reducing the need for armored car service tend to the TVMs, and personnel at the agency level to sort, count, face the bills and make the deposits has to be a monumental job involving multiple personnel and layers of process and cost). However for the low income riders the fact that TVMs are not universally available to add cash to an ORCA card, and having the resources to tend to a ORCA card (ATM card or credit card with sufficient funds to auto-reload, etc.) is a detriment to use itself which is why I believe ORCA use remains fairly low (at least from observation) on certain routes.
1	I like Option 4 the best. Low income families and people should have access to ST services. I can't imagine paying $4 one-way on the Sounder as a low-income person!
1	Lowering for some & raising for others could hurt the group that doesn't meet the low income category but still struggles. Not all employers supplement transit costs. Not all riders have other options, so they are stuck & take another hit.
1	If the rates go up and they probably will, the service as it is now is terrible, buses filled to the max to include standing, and bus after bus full, would this fare possibly increase more buses or just the low income fare increase.
1	This is stupid, why do us hard workers have to continue giving hand outs for people who are used to entitlements. these individuals and the raise in fair make it less tempting for any person with a car to use the bus as an alternative.
1	It's important for public transit to be accessible to all people, especially those who do not have many, if any, other options. I would gladly pay more so that others could access transit to get to jobs, school, and to do necessary tasks like go to the grocery store.
1	I think a new revenue source would be to collect fares more systematically on the trains in the transit tunnel. I think many riders don't pay either because they don't know how or there is little incentive.
1	I think the fare structure should do its best to maximize ridership. As a senior with a lot of money, I've never seen the rationale for giving all seniors a discounted rate. I don't see any reason that I should pay less than full fare, just because I'm 71. I would like to see Sound Transit replace the senior discount with a discount for low income seniors, just like the one it offers other people who need financial help to use the system.

1	Riding the bus can be pricey especially for working adults and so I do believe it is fair to offer low income offers
1	Instead of raising fares across the board, why not increase fares for extended distance? It's amazing to me that it costs the same for me to travel across town as it does to take a bus from downtown to Tacoma? Even if I pay $5.00 for a trip like that, I'm still saving a lot of money not using personal transportation.
1	-Why don't you get inspired from other big cities in USA which can maintain a lower fare than Seattle for extensive routes? see other cities as model. -Why your employees get more and better benefits then all other drivers in this country?How about you reduce the BENEFITS of your employees a little bit if you can't manage the fares .... -Why the average working class people should pay for a low incomed ones? you penalize the average citizens? I would like become a low income too ...after all. -How many times you want to increase the fares...till everybody lose interest in your public transportation. -Can you extend the bus 560 up North on 405 North bound another few miles and/or bus 566 to go to airport as well?Bellevue has a high income population not in need for buses anyway.... -How many times i suggested to the drivers to stop running the bus engine while waiting at Transit centers for 5-6 minutes or+?...saving gas $$
1	This is a direct case of people paying for other people rather than taking responsibilty for their predicament.
1	With the economy still stagnating, we don't need extra expenses to incur. Do you know in LA metro, a senior or disabled only pays 25 cents, therefore it is critical King County metro find a way without raising senior/disabled fares for the benefit of others. In a way, we are all low income riders and we are no better off financially than others. Not a good time to start raising fares when the economy still suffers.
1	Tough call. I think its a nice idea to reduce fares for low income adults, but I think it is extremely unfair that yet again, those of us making a higher income, may be forced to pay for it. We are being stretched in every direction.
1	I believe that Option 3 (Low-income fares and Raised fares on Link and ST King County) would be the most ideal solution, as this would provide relief for those who need public transportation, as well as be a stepping stone towards a more permanent solution. It also doesn't hamper others who are able to pay as make them suffer as a result.
1	Sound Transit should start charging a fare to riders of the Link in Tacoma. Why is that free? Why does Sound Transit subsidize it 100%? Makes no sense to me. A LOT of people ride it. Before Sound Transit considers raising fares, it should implement a fee on Link in Tacoma.
1	My vote is option 1, 2 or 3. BUT transit is also heavily subsidized. We cannot keep subsidizing it. Plus many low income riders live in kingco or pierce co. So if any increase is to occur it should be on light rail since that is more widely used by low income riders.
1	The current rates for seniors are amazingly low. I don't mind paying another 25 cents to make a more reasonable rate for low income adults.
2	I think before you consider fare hikes on Light Rail and ST, you should consider the fact of how you impact my usage. You have completely disintegrated my usage by adding permit parking not only in Tukwila, but the Tukwila ST stationa as well. I cannot trust finding a spot. Frequently I have teied only to end up driving to Seattle. You have made your service "neighborhood friendly" but anyone living out of the limits find your service even more useless now. Why not use tap on and off for parking with ORCA cards as well??? I know the technology is possible. Once tapping on the train, no extra fare. Not tapping, you will be charged for parking.
1	it is too expensive now you would get more ridership and traffic off the highway if the fares were lowered
1	Even though I now ride Sound Transit buses & trains infrequently compared to when I worked full-time in Seattle (Georgetown neighborhood), I still do like to ride transit, rather than drive my vehicle and deal with the traffic & parking hassles. I appreciate the idea of fare subsidy for low income adults who use the system within King County, so it matches what Metro does with their fares. I do not feel that folks in other counties, other than King County, should subsidize the fares, especially since Snohomish and Pierce County transit agencies are not matching these fare changes, so that's why I chose the option #3 above.
1	Make the low income option available with an ORCA card only. If the low income rider does not have the card, they pay full fare. That way the drivers don't have to decide who gets to pay what fare.
1	Sound Transit could assess an Employer Tax to cover the costs of a discounted fare, rather than raise fares for other riders.

1	If fares go up quality has to stay the same if not improve to levels when first implemented. I would like to see better enforcement of the no loud music and misbehavior. Would hate it to become as intolerable as riding Metro. Please continue with pay enforcement and if driver hears commotion then have them announce rules of behavior.
1	Fares on all services are currently too high. All fares across the board need to be cut in half, at a minimum, to make public transportation more affordable for all. However, one population's fare should not be raised to offer lower fare for folks who desperately need the reduction. Washington state gave an $8.7 billion tax break to Boeing last year and the legislature continues to refuse to implement a graduated income tax in a state with some of the wealthiest people in the world residing in it. Don't come to us telling us we need to pay more on basic services while the wealthy in our state continue to live free of the daily economic strains that the rest of us struggle through.
1	I don't think you should be raising the fare at all. You're trying to make us stay off the road to take public transport but yet willing to raise the price where some of us won't be able to afford it and will have to find other options. What about the parking garage? You're already making sumner pay for a permit and not only we have to pay a monthly payments, you want to increase the fare and I still have to catch a bus once I get to Seattle which means more money out of my pocket that I don't have. Don't increase the fare. It's already a lot
1	I already wonder whether riding the train is more cost-effective than other options. A fare hike might definitely tip the scales away from riding the train. I enjoy and appreciate being able to use public transit, but can't pay more for it.
1	Wit the soulder breakdowns, cancelations and other weekly mechanical problems, the program need revenue for maintenance.
1	Sound Transit needs to do a better job with the existing fares it collects and already gives too many discounts to too many riders.
1	The bus transportation is already cheap enough. People would find ways to abuse the system. Implementation and maintenance of the program seems like it would be a lot more streneous and require more resources with adding workload. Possibly needing to add additional positions that are currently not needed? Seems like you would be spending more money than saving when the system would be in place for continued maintenance.
1	All children 18 or younger in qualifying families with low income should receive free transit. One source to offset the cost is to limit the reduced fare for seniors. Many seniors have a good income.
1	I work with homeless young adults in King County, and a change in fare structures to make ST more accessible to them would make a world of difference. I've had young people in Seattle get jobs in other parts of the county that could help turn their lives around, only to be unable to afford the commute. When trying to get to vital services - shelters, specialized medical care, job opportunities, and schools - often those opportunities are missed or infrequently attended due to the barrier of transit costs. I've known many young people who are residing in a transitional living program in one part of the county, work in another, go to school in another, and have family support in another. Anything we can do to make these young peoples' lives more able to change for the better is worthwhile, and I know that having a low-income fare would definitely be a huge help.
1	I have a couple of concerns regarding the fair change. While I think it is a great idea to provide a low-income fair option, I wonder how tedious this process would be. It should be very easy for those of low-income to email, call, visit a station, or fill out an online form in order to get this low-income fair. The easier this process is, the better. This reduced fair should also be available without proof of an address, so homeless populations can benefit from reduced fairs. If a low-income rider needs to provide proof of income or provide documentation, these instructions and documents should come in multiple languages. Finally, when looking at household income, consideration should be made to communal living, where the overall wage of the house may be high, but these wages are not shared and individual income may be low.
1	1. I do not agree with the bus fare increase for senior citizens. 2. the bus service is very good. I really appreciate Sound Transit. So far, all the buses I have been on have very good service from the driver.
1	I think the current fare helps maintain a safe and professional environment in the sounder train. Everyone taking the train should pay the same fare. It is not fair for hard working people to have to pay higher fees. Retiree discounts or youth fare should be the only reduced rates. Less people will ride the train if the low income rate is introduced.
1	My comment is on another topic. I take the south Sounder regularly and have noticed that it is having delays much more frequently than it used to. One reason I love the Sounder - even though it takes longer - is its historical reliability, especially

	compared to taking a bus in traffic. I know you have little to no control over freight traffic and police activity, but mechanical issues have also seemed more common in the past year.
1	Either Option 1 (no change) or Option 4 (raise fares on all Sound Transit services). I don't agree with options 2 or 3 at all, that only some services are affected and others aren't. If there is a fare increase, it should be equitable across the board instead of singling out only one or two. I don't qualify for the low-income rate, since I am a single person household, but I am on a fixed income since I work for a non-profit and am on salary. I suggest an Option 5 - change the fares/rates to just two categories with a flat rate for each: Child/reduced fare of $1.50 and Adult fare of $2.50. Change the child rate to 17 or under with the adult rate 18 or older. You also need to have turnstiles at each station before being allowed to board, or ticket agents checking for paid fares on every ride. I have noticed a very high rate of ridership that rides without paying, and just by enforcing fares are being paid would greatly increase the revenue you are currently losing. Every other train/subway system requires proof of payment before being able to access the platform and board. I also think that those of us who regularly use Sound Transit to commute to work daily should have reserved parking spaces. We could swipe our Orca card to gain access to the commuter parking area. It takes me about 30 minutes to get to work, but I have to be at the parking lot 90 minutes before I start work in order to get a parking spot. I have no choice but to take transit, since parking downtown is prohibitively expensive for me, and traffic is horrendous.
1	How about just having buses that you currently have SHOW UP ON TIME and have polite bus drivers? Stop spending all of this $ with all of these proposals; put the $ into actual service!
1	I want to learn more about other options to offset the revenue cost. The city we live in has many high income people who probably never even use Metro's services. Are that many folks above this income line actually using Metro? I doubt that there are. Why can't some of the large corporations here, who likely have the most underlings (for lack of a better word) who ride Metro unwilling to help?
1	I think that the fare increase should be to restore lost service, not just to make up for low income fares.
1	If the low income adults are willing to submit to monthly drug and alcohol testing, then I would allow reduced fare. Otherwise no.
1	By all means raise the fares!!! As a senior I have been feeling immensely privileged to get such low fares when I don't really need the help, financially. I'm happy to pay more and believe we should do everything possible to promote the use of public transit and expand the service areas. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
1	I think you should discount the Taxpayers fare, afterall, they are the ones paying for all the service provided. I also think you should get rid of the security as I ride the Sounder and Tacoma Link daily - the security is totally useless - they stand around and chit chat with the drivers - especially on the Tacoma Link.
1	Right now, my employer pays for my Orca card, however, that could change at anytime. I also understand that there are low-income riders, but I don't think it's fair that they might get discounts, when there are hard-working people in this world who might have to pay higher rates, just to help out the low income people. This world sometimes seems backwards. The richest people and the poorest people always get help, but the middle-class workers get nothing. So no, I don't like the idea of offering discounts to low-income riders, and making real people pay more.
1	I'm okay with discounts for individuals that fall below the poverty line, but it should not be the responsibility of those who can pay until Sound Transit takes care of its own business affairs. They need to look internally and fix their financial issues prior to anything. The State needs to focus on transportation and fund it properly. I'm a no vote until this happens.
1	I don't think it's right that you cut services and then try to raise the fares as well. You need to manage your money better!
1	In life if you do not have money and are unwilling to work you do not get to partake in any luxuries. Riding a bus is a luxury. You have two feet and can walk to work. If you are disabled there are already programs in place to help. These systems for low income people usually do not help and lead to people abusing the system. You get what you work for in this life. You are not entitled to anything just because you were born.
1	Most low income adults only have public transit as a means to get to appointments, etc. I have no problem with a fare increase to myself to allow fare break to lower income. My major concern is that this may increase ridership during peak hours for ST Express Buses which are already overcrowded.
1	If this proposal is implemented, more cars and/or more trains should be added. The morning trains are already very crowded!

1	I work with homeless families who live in King County. They travel several times a day on public tranportation often using sound transit services. Transportation costs are a huge burden for low-income/no-income families. The families I work with do not have alternative options for transportation. They are not choosing to leave their car at home for the day. They must pay a high cost in proportion to their income to do the very things they need to do to increase their income. Families use transportation daily for work, childcare, school, job search, medical appointments and other essential activities.
1	I think the cost is already prohibitive - it's $5 to get back and forth to Seattle and God forbid if I forget my Orca card and have to go somewhere other than the tunnel! But...I was also extremely displeased when Metro got rid of the fare-free zone downtown, making it incredibly difficult for people who are struggling and just trying to make it in the downtown area. Given the opportunity to make it easier for someone else, our household wouldn't stop riding if we had to pay slightly more per trip; however, we ride minimally seven round trips per week. Please keep that in mind when increasing prices! Thanks for welcoming feedback.
1	I'd support an even greater fare increase if it would directly translate into greater bus service and improvements, including technology upgrades, closer coordination between agencies with regards to connections, and working with governments in improving bus lanes.
1	Those of us who commute daily are already gouged in the cost to use sound transit. The hassle, costs, time wasted waiting for busses and standing out in the elements make driving my car much more desirable.
1	I'm a student who commutes to Seattle for school and has to pay for everything on my own. It's hard enough to afford the bus pass as it is now. It's still cheaper than driving. But an up in the price wouldn't be idea for those of us that commute because it's our cheapest option.
1	I am tired of subsidizing for low income people (Seniors yes, youth and school kids no). My cell phone etc. Transit raises fares too much. I can't even catch the bus from Lake Stevens without paying a hefty amount on Community Transit. No, stop coming at us riders. I don't have a huge income and I try and make it from payday to payday. Don't mean to sound bitter but when I started riding the bus, it cost $1.35 from Everett to Seattle. Stop buying up land and doing projects when you DON'T have the money to pay for it.
1	I can afford to pay more and don't mind doing so. Protect the low-income riders dependent upon public transit. I use mostly 372 and 522, sometimes 931, and occasionally buses from Bothell to SeaTac. Also Light Rail.
1	I work as a case manager for homeless youth, and many of them need help with transit costs, as they sleep/work/spend time in different parts of the county. Some of them stay in a shelter in the University District, for example, but work jobs down in Kent or Auburn. The cost of getting back and forth can be prohibitive for young adults (up to age 26) with very limited resources. I would love to see a low-income adult fare that made it easier for people to get around the county and city to access necessary services and resources.
1	Option number 4 suggests a $.25 rate increase. Our train from the north end is so unreliable. If our train is cancelled, we typically are given bus service (which is wonderful). But, if it cancels last minute, we have to take Sound Transit and their fare is more than the train fare. Using an Orca card, I don't plan on using bus service and typically don't have extra money to pay for the bus. I don't think our rates should be raised as our train service is so sketchy in the winter months.
1	I realize I get a discounted senior ORCA. But I "paid my dues" for decades past. The low income get enough freebies and discounts as it is. The young and middle age riders who do not meet the "low income" criteria should not be penalized just because they are productive citizens. And those of us who paid full fares for years and now enjoy the perks of "old age" should not be either.
1	Affordable transportation for low income wage earners benefits all of society. Funding should be offset not be existing other riders (who provide benefit of riding the transit in the first place), but through general funding from tax base. Don't punish your ridership.
1	If i need to pay an extra 25 cents per ride, I can do that. It will not necessarily alter my income by much. But for a poor family, having lower fares make all the difference. This is just one little detail that will contribute to make Seattle and Puget Sound a more welcoming place for all families. Thank you.
1	.25 is not much and it can help people have low fares that need to get to work. I agree with discount fare and raise all others.
1	If we are going to subsidize fare's it should be through taxes and general funds, not through increased fares to other riders.

	Increasing fares to other riders will discourage them from using mass transit, further dropping transit system usage and income.
1	It is nice that they are considering a reduced fare program for low income riders just like king county metro hope it works.
1	There are many low income people in our community that rely on public transportation to get from places of work, school , hospitals, shopping and other daily functons. Coming up with a discount rate for this population is the right thing to do.
1	My husband has been out of work for over 6 mos, raising the fare 25 cents a trip would mean 50 cents a day which would add $2.50 a week, or $5 every 2 weeks. $5 dollars may not sound like a lot to you but it is too us.. and no I do not qualify for assistance because I am not poverty level so discounting would not help me..
1	Sound Transit is not a welfare agency, however this program is clearly a welfare program. I am strongly opposed to Sound Transit offering and adminstering a welfare program. The information provided about this program does not who will pay the administrative costs for this program. Is it lumped into lost revenue? Has the administrative cost been accurately calculated? I would anticipate greater appeals. Also, unlike other discounts, there would need to require recipients recertify their eligibility. How frequently would this be done? Overall, I am adamantly opposed to what I feel would be a welfare tax on the middle class.
1	I don't meet the reduced guidelines but am very very close. Should I quit my third job so that I can qualify for all of the subsidies that others feel they have a right to?
1	Sadly, Sound Transit doesn't run at the times of day, days of the week or to the locations where these low-income adult riders would be taking advantage of this program. So really this is just a $0.25 fare increase on all of us disguised as a feel-good program so that you don't have to deal with the backlash of increasing fares on the heels of cutting services. Nice.
1	It would be nice if you had a college age student fare 18-24. Lots of students live with parents but are not living on their own (might not qualify based on parents income) commute to Seattle via ST Express. They could use a discounted fare considering the lack of employment in that age group, 20% unemployment rate.
1	Raising the price only puts shorter (sounder) commuters, such as myself, back on the road. Gas prices are lower and if the fare goes up too much it will not be worth the hassle of buses, train, etc to get to work for the short commuter. I have just started commuting daily and this would definitely have me thinking twice about continuing on the sounder.
1	I am highly in favor of making this change and increasing access to our regional transportation systems for low income residents.
1	I think an increase of $.25 would be most appropriate on link light rail as it is most affordable transit option in my opinion. I take the sounder train which already has fares higher than most other options. An increase of fares would make me less interested in riding the train.
1	There are enough outside agencies that already subsidize low income riders and /or pay for gas if they have a car. Quit raising the fares!
1	I have no problem with regular fares being increased, as long as there is adaquate free parking at transit centers.
1	I ride the Sounder commuter train daily. There are far too frequent delays and train cancellations and late arrivals. Now you want to increase my fare without guaranteeing that the train service will improve and get me to my destination ON TIME? I say no way to that!
1	I think that the low income reduced fare should be equivalent to the youth fare, whichever is greater. The fare increase must also be consistent with King County Metro, as many riders share Sound Transit services with Metro.
1	I feel strongly that a reduced fare is a good idea; however, $1.50 is still out of reach for many individuals and families. I urge Sound Transit to consider even more deeply discounted fares, especially for the extremely low-income. In addition, I wonder if you're requiring individuals who qualify for the reduced fare to purchase an Orca card. That seems counter-productive. Lastly, I understand that the fare increase may be needed to offset costs of reduced fares, but I believe it is the responsibility of everyone living in the Sound Transit service area, not just transit riders, to cover the cost of transit. It is a public good that benefits everyone. We should be looking at not only expanding access through reduced fares, but also through increased service, including evening and weekend Sounder service. Thank you, Theresa Strachila tstrachila@gmail.com

1	I used the Sounder to travel up to the Hawks game this past weekend. I was surprised at the fare increase that had occurred over this past year. If the fare were to increase I would begin to encourage the others I travel with to just continue driving up to the stadium. I think my actions would be counter to what a service like mass transit is provided for. Thanks.
1	Should use this as an opportunity to create a join communication and marketing strategy with Metro bases on best practices for community engagement with multilingual, multiracial, multieconomic ridership we have in SE Seattle and South King County and the eastside and North King County.
1	Consider changing the King County employees with free rider passes to a regular or partial pay fare for using all Sound Transit services.
1	You can't underestimate the power of helping low income people get to and from work and the grocery on transit rather than walking. ST routes aren't in our neighborhood, but metro costs for me and my kids getting to school and work are out of reach often. We bus as far as school and I walk the remaining five miles to work.
1	I think it makes sense to have the same services as Metro so that there isn't confusion for riders, drivers and new riders/guests. Making things uniform will help more people use our wonderful public transportation.
1	I think it is important that on long transit rides (30+ minutes) that there is enough transit service so that passengers do not have to stand!
1	Analyzing economic actions in cause-and-effect terms means examining the logic of the incentives being created, rather than simply the goals being sought.
1	I find the proposal unfair, I don't think just because someone has a lower income, the rest of us should have to subsidize it.
1	I am barely able to support my family - the extra cost for my fare would make my commute out of reach. I would look for a job out of the city so I could just drive my car. I am barely over the cut off - and I am already struggling to keep my child fed and in shoes, let alone worry about my transportation. Please think about everyone . . . the rich are not taking the bus.
1	There needs to be higher taxes to support Sound Transit (including more park and rides, they fill up way too early). Sales tax is too regressive of a tax. I support discounted fares for low income riders, but the money should come from general revenue sources, not from other riders who are already doing their part to lessen global warming, conserving natural resources for future generations and help reduce gas and oil used by United States. PS The State of Washington needs a State income tax, there is just not enough money for government.
1	Asking other transit riders to subsidize fares for low-income families is extremely unfair. Many transit riders, myself included, have no other transportation options available to them, even though we do not qualify as "low income." Moreover, I do not understand the rationale of "as Metro goes, so must Sound Transit." This is a huge logical fallacy. If the question is fare equity, I would like the Board to address the question of why a trip from Seattle to Federal Way should cost less than a trip from Seattle to Mountlake Terrace, or from Canyon Park to UW-Bothell. Or why a trip from Seattle to such far-flung locations as Gig Harbor, DuPont, or even Olympia (!) should cost the same as a trip between Seattle and Lynnwood. I realize that the fare structure was changed a few years ago in the name of simplicity, but the service area is really too large to comprise only three fare zones.

— END —

Seattle Transit Blog

Sound Transit Considering Low-Income Fare and 25-Cent Fare Increase

SEPTEMBER 22, 2014 AT 7:31 AM BY BRENT WHITE

The Sound Transit Board of Directors will consider joining Metro's low-income fare program on Thursday, November 20. The proposed fare would match the youth fare, but might only be implemented on some services, if at all.

The service combinations under consideration for the low-income fare are:
Option 1. None
Option 2. Link only
Option 3. Link and ST Express intra-county
Option 4. Link, all ST Express, and Sounder

For each service adopting the low-income fare, the proposal calls for raising the other fares on that service by 25 cents across the board, except for the free categories (children 0-5, Access riders with a current monthly Access pass, and uniformed law enforcement).

The low-income fare would be the same as the raised youth fare (for ages 6-18): $1.50 on Link and ST Express 1-county, $2.75 on ST Express multi-county, and $2.25-$4.00 on Sounder. The low-income fare would require using loaded ORCA product, while the youth fare would merely require ID

with age. Children ages 0-5 would continue to ride free with an adult, up to four per adult.

The resulting regular adult fares would be $2.25-$3.00 on Link, $2.75 on ST Express 1-county, $3.7 on ST Express multi-county, and $3.00-$5.50 on Sounder.

Fares for Regional Reduced Fare Permit holders (for seniors 65 and older and riders with qualifying disabilities) would be $1.00 on Link and ST Express 1-county, $1.75 on ST Express multi-county, an $1.50-$2.75 on Sounder.

A series of open houses will be held, leading up to a public hearing on Thursday, October 23. Comments, including online, will be accepted through October 23.

Any approved fare changes would take effect on March 1, 2015, to coincide with King County Metro fare changes. Public Health – Seattle and King County, and other agencies, are expected to start issuing the low-income ORCA card in February 2015. To be eligible, you have to be at 200% or less of the federal poverty level.

aw says
September 22, 2014 at 8:33 am

It seems very odd to me that the RRFP fares will be lower than the low-income fare.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 8:43 am

Sound Transit is simply following Metro's lead on the fare levels. Metro couldn't afford making the low-income fare lower than $1.50. Since the regular peak fare is only going up to $2.75, the RRFP fare couldn't have gone higher than $1.37, due to federal law.

Stephen says
September 22, 2014 at 9:10 am

Why don't they split the difference and make it $1.25? I think it's weird to be that people over 65 (who may or may not have money) get a bigger discount for people we know don't have money, who are under 65.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 9:31 am

The RRFP is also for riders for disabilities. The increase from 75 cents to $1.25 (a 67% fare increase) would be an incredibly hard sell. Moreover, since it can be paid in cash, that would just mean more riders pulling out a dollar bill, then fumbling around for a quarter.

Over the long run, I think equality will be achieved by holding down low-income and youth fare increases while bringing up RRFP fares one quarter at a time.

William Aitken says
September 22, 2014 at 10:46 am

Metro can't afford to pay for $1.50 — in case you hadn't noticed, they are cutting service next week to help pay for this — what's another unfunded quarter between friends?

William Aitken says
September 22, 2014 at 10:55 am

They could have made it zonal [I think that's a horrible idea, but they could have].

Mike Orr says
September 22, 2014 at 1:30 pm

Metro *can* afford $1.50 or it would not have proposed it. What it *can't* afford to do is not raise the regular fare. Keeping the regular fare as-is would require deeper cuts and make Metro more like Community Transit. King County is much larger and more urban than Snohomish County and has more poor people, so CT's level of service coudn't possibly address King County's mobility needs or non-driving desires. (See the Valley Transit Authority in San Jose for an example of suburban transit levels in a large city.)

Until now low-income people without an RRFP have paid the regular fare as it periodically rises. That's fine when the regular fare is $1 but it becomes untenable when the regular fare is $2.50. Raising it further risks a populist revolt (Hello Kshama Sawant!) and more fare evasion (transfer roulette, change fumbling with "I don't have the last 50c", "I don't have money"). A low-income ORCA fare will

reduce fare evasion and speed boarding.

Some will object, “They still won’t pay the fare because the driver won’t force them.” But *some* low-income people want to be law-abiding and don’t want to confront the driver, and they want faster boarding too (and understand it leads to more frequent service). This will help those people out.

Another thing Metro *can’t* do is set the low-income fare at $1.00 as some activists wanted. $1.50 is as far down as Metro felt it can go.

Sam says
September 22, 2014 at 9:34 am

I wouldn’t say we know low-income people don’t have money. A low-income person, after you factor in they may be taking advantage of 5 to 10 different income-tested benefits (I know one “low-income” woman who pays under $100/month in rent for an apartment that would rent for $1400/month, sells her EBT card balance for cash, works under the table and doesn’t declare that income or pay tax on it, and gets free day care), may have a higher discretionary income than a middle class person. It very well may be that a person who has a low-income status has more discretionary income than a person making $70,000/year.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 9:43 am

Yes, there exist examples that go against the statistical trend. Would you disagree that low-income riders will have less average disposable income than non-low-income riders?

William C. says

September 22, 2014 at 9:45 am

Not to mention that it's very easy for someone with disposable income to count as "low-income" if she's committing fraud by not reporting her income…

Sam says

September 22, 2014 at 9:51 am

I was respondinig to Stephen's comment that "we know" low-income people don't have money. We don't know that. And I'm not here to discuss averages. I also believe income-tested benefits, including things like low-income fares, do more harm than good.

Anandakos says

September 22, 2014 at 9:55 am

Sam wants to save the low-income village by destroying it.

Brent says

September 22, 2014 at 9:59 am

If I were trying to hide from the law, I wouldn't get a low-income ORCA, registered to my name, that could be used to track where I have traveled on the bus when the police bring a search warrant to Metro or ST.

Sadly, this may mean, for example, that undocumented immigrants and people hiding in shelters from domestic abuse may need special outreach and accommodation to obtain the low-income ORCA.

Sam says
September 22, 2014 at 10:11 am

Brent, people in shelters ride for free. Metro gives human service agencies subsidized bus tickets to hand out to people staying in shelters.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 10:17 am

The supply of tickets for shelters is limited. They run out. It is also a time-consuming exercise (filling out paperwork for each ticket). Getting a card and putting a pass on it is so much cheaper for the agency handling the tickets, and therefore for the taxpayers who fund the shelters.

jims says
September 22, 2014 at 10:41 am

How long would a monthly pass given to a person at a day shelter stay in their hands? It will be sold for cash pretty quickly i think. Bus tickets are better for shelters

Glenn in Portland says
September 22, 2014 at 12:31 pm

If it is someone that is legitimately looking for housing, they will be having to run all over the region going to housing interviews, and they won't be able to do that if they have sold their pass. That and trying to get between the day and night shelters (which are in two different parts of the city) are the two biggest uses of the transit passes I see where I volunteer.

Not everyone on public assistance is there because they are trying to game the system ya know!

Mike Orr says
September 22, 2014 at 1:45 pm

Has Sam ever looked at what people on benefits go through? Hours and hours of filling out forms and talking to interviewers and collecting tax returns and receipts to qualify for benefits and renew them. Stress-inducing treatment by exasperated and overworked agency staff trying to keep up with the caseload and screen out fraudsters. The stigma of applying to benefits, and the time it takes to go to the offices on the bus (since they often don't have a car). This on top of whatever disabilities they may have.

The first thing to look at is what percent of recipients work under the table or are otherwise ineligible. I would guess it's more like 5% or 20%, not 50% or 75%. So the majority of individuals need the benefits, and adding more hoops on top of the existing ones is unnecessary and cruel. If you think there are a significant number of fraudsters, start a group and do some research and send the agencies their names and what makes them ineligible.

Bjorn Swenson says
September 22, 2014 at 8:53 am

Possible theory: For low-income people eligible for reduced fares, transit service behaves as a Giffen Good, a product or service where demand directly (as opposed to inversely, like most other goods) correlates with price.

A low-income family with multiple driving-age members may only be able to afford one car, or a single adult forgoes a car due to the high cost of transit fares. Lower the fares, and people have more spending money; if this amount is enough to allow them to purchase another vehicle, and they consequently reduce their transit usage. If transit service behaves as a Giffen Good, then a low-income fare would actually decrease, not increase ridership.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 9:26 am

"Evidence for the existence of Giffen goods has generally been limited."

Given that there is more empiracle evidence for the Higgs Boson than there is for a Giffen Good, I think the appropriate word is "hypothesis". Sure, there exist people for whom such behavior has happened, but that's not the same as a statistical tendency.

Anandakos says
September 22, 2014 at 9:51 am

Giffen Goods are rare art and antiques, new versions of the iPhone (for a few days), and overhyped IPO's, not bus rides. Would be drivers "forego" getting another car because bus fares are too high? That may happen one or twice a year in King County,

but as Brent said “it’s not a statistical tendency”.

Brent says
September 22, 2014 at 9:51 am

It won’t shock most STB readers that I happen to support Option 4. Nevertheless, I have to point out the missed opportunity to tack on a 25-cent cash surcharge on regular ST Express fares, which would make them an even $3 and $4.

It also pains me to see Sounder continue to cost more than ST Express for identical trips, unless Sound Transit is trying to get people to not ride Sounder.

Anandakos says
September 22, 2014 at 9:53 am

The cost to provide another Sounder trip once a schedule is full is stupendous, so ST has a strong incentive to limit ridership growth. It’s doing the right thing.

djw says
September 22, 2014 at 11:35 am

How close to full is South Sounder? Have we reached standing room? (I’ve only ever taken Sounder North, and reverse-trip South).

Anandakos says
September 22, 2014 at 4:19 pm

DJW,

It doesn't matter how close it is presently. Eventually all of the trips for which slots have been purchased **will** be full. At that time ST will have to raise fares differentially (e.g. return to the current system), so why change.

And, as William pointed out, Sounder is a faster, more reliable and more comfortable service than is ST Express. It should command a higher fare. Being for public accommodations doesn't mean every option has to be available to every person. The government can't afford that so it's a good idea to price scarcer services higher.

Mike Orr says
September 22, 2014 at 5:56 pm

Both Link and Sounder get less expensive per rider with each additional rider. But Link can slip below ST Express and Metro pretty easily, and probably has gone below Metro in some cases (e.g., for distances up to Westlake – Rainier Beach, which are cheaper on Link). But Sounder's operating costs are several times higher than ST Express's even if the trains are full. That poses a dilemma for making Sounder the primary trunk line in its area.

aw says
September 22, 2014 at 6:21 pm

Sounder capacity can be increased by lengthening train consists. If you can fill the seats, that lowers the cost per boarding. It makes plenty of sense to do this given

the high operating costs. It's not a panacea though; you would need the spare rolling stock and at some point the station platforms would need to be lengthened.

Anandakos says
September 22, 2014 at 8:23 pm

Aw, Mike,

You are both spot on in your respective analyses, but no matter how long the trains get (and I'm pretty sure they can't get longer than the KSS platforms as they are today) eventually to accommodate more riders they'll be faced with the cost of another pair of slots.

And that's assuming Matt Rose thinks he can spare them……..

William Aitken says
September 22, 2014 at 10:34 am

Or unless Sounder is a more desirable product, which, at least in my opinion, it probably is.

Mark Dublin says
September 22, 2014 at 10:28 am

After this country's economy and politics this last forty years, either I've got a serious anger problem or maybe just plain rabies over the outrage about people cheating because their income isn't low enough to get a break.

One of the reasons for so many right-wing bumper stickers on beat-up pickup trucks with beds full of tools is that it's an arbitrary mandate with a lot of teeth separating poor people who can't work from people who are still poor no matter how hard they work.

Definition of "poor?" "Inability to participate in society as a full member due to lack of money." Written about 40 years ago, as so much manufacturing work started getting shoveled across our borders and shorelines.

I've got a real simple solution that'll automatically cure our fare elegibility problem: put everybody physically able to work at such high wages that nobody qualifies as poor. Add four weeks' vacation per year, some national health care that doesn't lose national elections for Democrats, and labor unions with some power- and we can raise the fares triple.

Someone asked George Bernard Shaw: "Don't you just love the poor?": His answer: "I hate the poor and look forward to their speedy elimination!" Which will do the same for a few really savage hates of my own: bridges falling out from under our cars, trains, including oil ones, derailing from decrepit tracks, and seatless prison toilets in ST bathrooms.

In other words, I'm a real conservative.

Mark Dublin

William Aitken says
September 22, 2014 at 10:53 am

I think Mark hits the nail squarely on the head. The reason welfare does so poorly at the polls isn't because of the greedy 1%-ers (not that they don't exist, just that there aren't *by definition* very many of them). Rather it's the hard working poor who barely eke out a living, one missed paycheck or medical crisis away from utter ruin. They see

neighbors apparently gaming the system, living better with much less effort. I'm not sure that they'd agree with his solutions, but I'm certain they'd agree with his basic diagnosis of the problem.

Breadbaker says
September 22, 2014 at 1:44 pm

I'm not a Christian, but do these people (whom I assume are by and large Christian) have some special annotated version of the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus suggested means testing the poor?

Mike Orr says
September 22, 2014 at 2:00 pm

There's also a lot of misinformation about welfare. Long-term welfare has been gone since the Clinton administration. There are now lifetime limits, and people who can work have to work at least part time or be in school to keep their benefits, even if it wreaks havoc on the person or family (e.g., single mothers). Able-bodied men and childless women need not apply, only women with children and the disabled. And as for "welfare queens" who have a child every year to keep her benefits (and has a beloved SO whom she won't marry to remain eligible): there's no way that the benefits can fully compensate for all the costs of raising a kid, much less to age 18 when the welfare will have long run out.

Norah says
September 22, 2014 at 2:52 pm

Or people who they perceive are gaming the system, even though they're not.

Sam says
September 22, 2014 at 6:14 pm

If you truly want to help a poor person, do what I do, and lecture them on everything they're doing wrong.

Nathanael says
September 24, 2014 at 3:15 pm

National single-payer health care (like Canada), or a National Health Service (iike the UK) would make a huge difference. Medical costs are frequently crippling; I believe 2/3 of all bankruptcies in the US are now due to medical costs. And obviously, being sick frequently prevents people from working.

We also have a particularly nasty quirk in our "welfare" non-system where people who have pretty severe disabilities, but who could do *some* work part-time (but not enough to make enough money to live on) frequently lose their disability benefits if they do *any* work. Nice, America, real nice.

Basically the US doen't have a welfare system any more. It's horrible. It's worse than Mexico — and I mean that literally, since Mexico is establishing single-payer health care one state at a time, as we speak.

Mark Dublin says

September 22, 2014 at 1:59 pm

Reason I stress this point, William, is that I've not only worked among people for whom this reaction is an understandable reaction to an unfair system. My wife and experienced this exact situation at a very bad time, at the hands of both public and co-op run agencies exactly because our real economic distress didn't leave us poor enough for a break.

A "sliding scale" for a working according to provable income is not the same thing as a handout.So while it's only human- and extremely beneficial to the unjustly powerful- to direct anger downward, I think the main force behind the fury is that good qualities themselves are punished. Worse every year for the last forty.

"Back in my day" needs a pitchfork and a gabled farmhouse. But very On-T fact for transit is that hardly anyone just turning voting age in this country now has ever seen either government or political effort of their own bring them anything worthy of either respect or a minute of their own time.

Or any experience whatsoever with any labor union, let alone one with the power to be their own force for improving their lives. Basic blame for situation? Two things: One, the world's recovery from World War II around 1970 left Uncle Sam with his pants down and his belt stuck in a rusty gearbox. And two, the Viet Nam war took both the money and the young leadership we needed to retool.

Cure right now?: For a young transit driver, two, run for precinct committeeman and succeeding positions in either major party or one of your own making. And one, drive your bus or train so every as if the the next forty years of work shifts can make up for every day of the last forty. Side benefit? Chance that next contract will suck a thousand days less than this one.

MD

Glenn in Portland says
September 22, 2014 at 5:44 pm

I think it should also be pointed out that this policy would help encourage low income to ride Link, where (as best as can be determined from the reports) their trip costs quite a bit less per mile than on parallel bus lines.

It makes absolutely no sense to encourage, by any fare policy, passengers to take a more expensive trip when a less expensive one may be provided.

Brent says
September 23, 2014 at 6:48 am

The Link, ST Express single-county, and Metro low-income fare would be identical ($1.50) if Option 3 or 4 passes. The Link and Metro low-income fare would be identical if Option 2 passes.

That said, there are some Metro bus trips with cheaper regular fare than Link for the same trip. For example, an off-peak trip on route 124 from downtown to Tukwila International Boulevard Station costs $2.25 (and will cost $2.50 effective March 1, 2015). That same trip on Link costs $2.75 (and would cost $3 effective March 1, 2015, if any option other than Option 1 passes). One could also keep the cost of that Link trip down to $2.25 (or $2.50 after March 2015) by tapping off and back on at Rainier Beach Station.

asdf says
September 22, 2014 at 8:01 pm

So the question becomes:

If we continue to fund fare decreases for the poor with fare increases for everyone else, will we end with a mobility system for the poor, rather than a mobility system for the public at large? We are already at the point where bus fares are more expensive than the monorail, and more expensive than driving for a large number trips (assuming you already own the car and parking is free). A group of 3-4 people can even travel short trips (up to 1-2 miles) for less money on a taxi than what they would spend on bus fares.

Al Dimond says
September 22, 2014 at 11:46 pm

The trips where mass transit truly wins on price these days are trips where parking isn't free. For the rest of the trips, taken individually, whether it wins by a little or loses by a little on price isn't that significant if it's inconvenient compared to the alternative. If you already own a car and are going somewhere with free parking, driving your own car is at least faster most of the time, and speed is the biggest part of convenience. What matters is not the price of individual trips once you've already decided on car ownership, but the aggregate: is the transit system good enough for a household to decide the cost of car ownership isn't worth the benefit? When it comes to that, service quality and quantity is what's most important, at any fare level from Island Transit up to TfL.

jon says
September 22, 2014 at 10:27 pm

It seems more than a little odd to me to propose a huge fare reduction for a big part of the ridership as the system now more than ever is pressed for money and cutting service.

I have no problem with a low income fare, I just have a problem with where the money is coming from to pay for it. Why cant this be some new social service budget item that reimburses Metro and ST for difference in fare from full fare instead of throwing this burden

on the back of Metro and ST's already tight and shrinking budgets? Our transit systems need all the money they can get to just hold onto what dwindling service we already have.

Glenn in Portland says
September 22, 2014 at 11:58 pm

It would be wonderful if transit agencies were properly compensated for these discount fares when their federal grant money was obtained. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be any sort of aim towards doing that, which in the end hurts the ability of the agencies to provide transit.

This is an ongoing problem everywhere in the USA. Twin Transit in Centralia illustrates the problem very well: they cut back their bus service, forcing more elderly / disabled to the lift type on-call service which costs about 10 times more per passenger to operate – forcing yet more cutbacks.

The Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP) is a social services agency but winds up providing scheduled bus service from Castle Rock to Vancouver due to the importance of transportation for those that need social services. At one time their bus service went all the way to Olympia, but they've had to cut that back to Centralia, and now Castle Rock as the funding has been cut back.

Nathanael says
September 24, 2014 at 3:18 pm

Problem is indeed nationwide. In upstate NY, the majority of rural bus services have actually been funded by *Medicaid* for decades, because it was cheaper than paying for the necessary taxi / shuttle trips for the disabled people on Medicaid who needed transportation to their doctors. Cuomo is trying to cut this, which will actually increase the expenses of the counties (which are forced to pay for Medicaid in NY) and simultaneously destroy most of the rural bus systems.

(By the way? Cuomo is awful.)

Nathanael says
September 24, 2014 at 4:02 pm

Some links on the horrorshow created by Cuomo out here:

http://www.ithacajournal.com/story/opinion/contributors/2014/07/25/rural-bus-service-threatened/13090981/

http://www.pressconnects.com/story/news/local/tioga-county/2014/09/18/tioga-county-suspends-public-transit/15829431/

It's actually more cost-effective to run the bus system, but Cuomo is insisting on burning the Medicaid funds to pay for taxis. The really awful thing about it is that they aren't state funds, since NY requires the counties to pay for Medicaid out of property tax.

Evil, vicious little thug — Cuomo can't die soon enough.

Mike Orr says
September 23, 2014 at 10:00 am

That's the same argument as why doesn't the county fund Access as a social service rather than taking it out of the transit budget. That would enable regular buses to be more frequent. But nobody in government seems interested.

Mathew "RennDawg" Renner says
September 24, 2014 at 9:21 am

This is so stupid. Everyone should pay the same fare. Safeway does not give me a discount because I make minimum wage. I think I qualify for this but will not take part. Stop the deadbeats who think that the service is free.

RDPence says
September 24, 2014 at 3:50 pm

Given current efforts to further integrate Metro and Sound Transit services, it's past time to have a single integrated fare structure for the two systems.

I was at SeaTac/Airport Station yesterday, and as often happens there I helped an arriving visitor get to his destination on transit. Told him to get off the train at Westlake and catch one of 4 EB Metro buses to get him to his Capitol Hill destination.

He asked if we had integrated fares, if his train ticket would get him the last 14 blocks on the bus? And I had to tell him No, we can't do that here. He will have to pay a separate fare for the bus. Truly embarrassing.

— END —

Seattle Transit Blog

$3/$4 ST Express Cash Fares? Sound Transit Could Use the Extra Revenue

OCTOBER 15, 2014 AT 7:45 AM BY BRENT WHITE

The Sound Transit Board of Directors is scheduled to take action on systemwide fare changes next month, raising all non-free fares $0.25, and creating a low-income fare, matching the youth fare.

However, the fare-revenue projections in the recently-released 2015 Draft Service Implementation Plan show a dip in fare revenue next year, even with the increase. (p.103)

The resulting ST Express fares, if the proposal goes through, would be $2.75 for 1-county trips and $3.75 for multi-county trips. It would be a simple matter to raise the cash fare to an even $3 for 1-county trips and $4 for multi-county trips. If it helps push riders to pay by tapping ORCA, then that would be wonderful for the rest of the riders already doing their part. If riders insist on paying with cash, at least most of them would be just shoving in dollar bills, instead of fishing for bills, then fishin for change.

If these fares seem high, consider that they are still less than or equal to what Community Transit is charging for its express routes, in all payer categories.

Charging more for cash fares than ORCA fares is not taboo. King County Ferries has been doing it f years. The low-income fare is ORCA-product-only, which means a de facto cash surcharge for low-income riders of $1.25 on 1-county ST Express trips and $1 on multi-county ST Express trips, if the Board approves staff's fare proposal.

Given that most ST Express riders are already using ORCA, the reaction to tacking on an extra 25-cent cash surcharge for regular-fare payers would likely be something like this: *(video not shown)*

Okay, Sound Transit wouldn't actually be banning the nuisance of cash fumbling, but hopefully the effect of a 25-cent cash surcharge would be almost as good, and not leave anyone stranded if they lose their ORCA card.

Ben says
October 15, 2014 at 8:33 am

Haven't we had this discussion before about how ORCA cards should get a discount rather than cash fares having a surcharge? Same effect but better marketing.

People are trained to look for coupons and discounts. Imagine if you went to the grocery store and your frozen pizza had a surcharge if you forgot to grab the coupon next to it.

Kyle S. says
October 15, 2014 at 9:41 am

5 cent bag fee, anyone? That seems to work out just fine.

Besides, I don't see the "club price" as a discount. That's the *real* price; the "regular price" is the penalty for forgetting your club card or refusing to hand over your personal information to obtain one.

Eric says
October 15, 2014 at 9:57 am

Exactly. You have the right to remain anonymous and untracked when you shop for groceries, but you'll pay a hefty surcharge for the privilege. I really wish we weren't heading in that direction for transit as well. Already if you wish to purchase a monthly pass or utilize employer transit benefits, you have to use the Orca card, which records exactly which buses you rode and when, and stores this information indefinitely.

I prefer not to have my travels recorded, but not so much that I'll pay more for the privilege…just like in the grocery store. However, why can't we have the best of both worlds? There's no need for the Orca database to store trip-level details until

the end of time. I can see a need to store the information for perhaps a month or two for customer service purposes. After that the card numbers should be stripped from the records

SEAN says
October 15, 2014 at 10:06 am

Because every transit rider/ pedestrian is a potential “evil doer.” LOL

Eric Goodman says
October 15, 2014 at 2:38 pm

Eric – As I understand it, the data is not stored indefinitely. Anything beyond 90 days is just stats, not records. None of the time/date/location info is linked to your account and it can’t be used to track your movements.
As a route planner, I’ve tried to analyze transfers and the best I can get from Orca is route to route. It won’t even tell me time of day or route direction, so I know x number of transfers happen from the 105 to the 201 but not whether they were NB to NB or NB to SB, AM or PM, etc…
Sometimes less is not more, it’s just less. Want better planning? We need better data. I don’t care about your travels.

Charles says
October 20, 2014 at 6:21 am

Nothing requires you to tell the truth on a club card application. You could make

up a name and fake address like the address of a sports stadium.

Mike Orr says
October 15, 2014 at 9:54 am

"Club prices" are what the sale prices used to be, and still are at places that don't have club cards.

SEAN says
October 15, 2014 at 10:08 am

Whole Foods?

Kyle S. says
October 15, 2014 at 10:21 am

No, club prices and sale prices are different, and exist simultaneously.

A club price is the price at which an item is regularly offered for those who have a club membership. It's not time-limited.

You can still use a coupon on an item for which you paid the club price. You can still get bulk discounts on a club-priced item. And sometimes they'll even lower the club price as part of a sale.

Mike Orr says

October 15, 2014 at 10:52 am

"Club cards" in the sense of supermarket loyalty cards, not membership cards like Costco or the co-ops. The card-only discounts at loyalty-card stores are the same as sales at non-loyalty-card stores.

As for Whole Foods, you have to compare identical items, so organic with organic. Whole Foods is often cheaper than supermarkets' "organic/natural" section, especially its no-frills store brand "365".

d.p. says

October 15, 2014 at 1:35 pm

Supermarkets (non-membership-required-to-shop Costco model) are required to offer the lowest advertised price to any customer who requests it. You can therefore ask to swipe a "store card" every time. An employee who battles you over this is in violation of the law.

You can still obtain and use a non-registered ORCA card in perpetuity. The anonymity is similar but not as total as swiping a "store card", because it still needs to be yours.

SEAN says

October 15, 2014 at 2:14 pm

Actually I was kidding in regards to Whole Foods – as I think the store is great. Not a fan of those clubs. Yes I know Costco is based near Seattle.

Eric says

October 15, 2014 at 2:33 pm

The unregistered Orca card is not really an answer for those who want to travel without being tracked. Just like with a registered Orca card, each trip is recorded, and this record is stored indefinitely. The record is still tied to the card number, which can be tied back to the person using the card if the card ever falls into the hands of someone who wants to look at the history.

In fact, the unregistered card is worse in some ways than the registered card because the owner of the registered card has already set up a user name and password to protect the data from anyone other than government investigators or others who are allowed to go through official channels to get the information. With the unregistered card, literally anyone who gets momentary access to the card can get the card number and register that card themselves to look up past trips.

Privacy isn't something that should only be of concern to criminals who "have something to hide." This could be exploited by a wallet thief looking up their victim's travel patterns to figure out the best time to rob their house, or a stalker wanting a good way to track their victim, or someone who suspects their significant other of cheating and wants some proof. There are any number of reasons why a law-abiding citizen might not want a permanent record of their bus trips. It's a shame that the Orca system, for all of its virtues in enabling easier and faster payments, gets the privacy aspect so wrong.

d.p. says

October 15, 2014 at 5:46 pm

Are you sure that you can view the entire usage history of a found/stolen ORCA that you have just taken upon yourself to register? And are you also sure that a stalker/thief could register said card without, at the very least, a valid e-mail address that would give their snooping actions a traceable link back to them? The

Venn diagram of conditions for abuse of a non-registered card would seem to leave little real-world chance of such abuse occurring.

That said, I would be perfectly happy to see permanently-recorded ORCA actions (or those displayed in one's online account at any point in time) limited only to the date, time, and agency (not the route number), and only when the action causes a change in card balance (no record of transfers or of swipes below the active face value).

SEAN says
October 15, 2014 at 6:02 pm

Eric,

I understand your point, but there are also upsides to such passenger tracking. In NYC for example there were criminal cases in witch suspects were exonerated as a result of the Metrocard. The data being introduced as evidence was indisputable proof of someones whereabouts.

Now with that said, I can understand the uncertainty of such tracking with transit cards. But weighing the costs & benefits of the technology, I rather have them than not. Besides what do you think happens every time you swipe your credit or debit card? The card issuers track patterns in spending & if something suddenly looks odd, the card can be frozen & the user contacted for verification.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 8:41 pm

Having your registered card tapping on certain readers at certain times is not at all proof that the legitimate owner was doing the tapping. It may be a compelling

case to jurors unfamiliar with the concept of friends lending each other their transit passes, but it is a wide open door to false alibis, with the collusion of accomplices.

In particular, someone can carry two cards, so that they can show their legit card if inspected, but tap twice at some readers. Alibi created. Virtually no risk involved, so long as the conspirators trust each other.

Glenn in Portland says
October 15, 2014 at 10:29 pm

It definitely does not stay accessible over 90 days, as I have looked at my card history a few times in trying to figure out where all the money went. There were one or two times the foot ferry operator took quite a while to download the data from the card reader, so the amount available on the card bounced around a bit.

If a stalker gets close enough to someone to steal an unregistered ORCA card from someone they know, it seems to me they've already gotten too close.

It is far more likely that someone would have picked up a random unregistered card that would have been accidentally dropped, but what bus routes and when doesn't seem to me that it would be that useful. Route 10 at 6:37 am. OK, so it is known approximately where that bus would be from the timetable. There is still no way to know what the person was doing there or how far away they walked to get to the bus stop.

I would be far more concerned with the various private companies that can buy and sell your shopping habits to each other, including what over the counter and prescription drugs you may have purchased, than the ORCA card. The freedom of undue search clause in the constitution has a reasonable restraint on government entities. However, private corporations have no such restraints as the USA has no right to privacy clause in its constitution, unlike a number of other countries.

Eric says
October 16, 2014 at 9:00 am

> Are you sure that you can view the entire usage history of a found/stolen ORCA that you have just taken upon yourself to register? And are you also sure that a stalker/thief could register said card without, at the very least, a valid e-mail address that would give their snooping actions a traceable link back to them?

Yes and yes. I created a new account on the Orca website yesterday. The sign-up process requires a bunch of contact info, including email address and street address, but none of this information is verified in any way. There isn't even a confirmation email. You can input completely bogus contact info and still log into the account. The only real info the server could possibly be recording is an IP address, but this can be trivially thwarted by using any public WiFi.

After creating the account, I took an Orca card that I had not previously registered and registered it. Once you have an online account, all you need to register a new card is the numbers printed on the front of the card. Lo and behold, the trip history was right there!

> It definitely does not stay accessible over 90 days, as I have looked at my card history a few times in trying to figure out where all the money went.

This is false. All you have to do is enter a date range more than 90 days old and you can see your history from that time. The interface is much less than perfect, so I can understand how you might not have noticed the place to enter a date range.

Glenn in Portland says
October 17, 2014 at 6:17 am

That came up blank for me when I attempted to enter a date range older than 90 days.

Al Dimond says
October 15, 2014 at 9:14 am

Any idea why fare revenue projections are dipping?

Jon says
October 15, 2014 at 3:44 pm

Ya that was odd because of the wording of the blog post. From my understanding, the projections for lower total revenue from fares is a result of the subsidized low-income fares. Meaning that discount price for low income dips into the funding more than the $0.25 additional cost makes up for it. I'm not sure how this is even an issue worth blogging about. ST just needs to raise the $0.25 or not discount the low-income fares as much as planned.

Despite that, ST cash fares being higher than Orca and then the transfers only working one way is just confusing. Honestly I think ST knows what they are doing for the most part, with the exception of fares.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 8:52 pm

I suppose it is worth reminding people that *all* fares are subdized. Some are just subsidized more than others. One could make the claim that low-income riders are still subsidizing senior and disabilities fares, if one ignores that reality.

And of course, without a differential, ORCA users could be said to be subdizing cash fumblers, but that is a matter of perspective.

Zach Shaner says
October 15, 2014 at 9:45 am

Yes, this could help, but not by that much. STExpress has an 83% ORCA use rate, higher than any other mode on any agency except Sounder (93%). Higher cash fares could do much more for Metro (64% ORCA use) or Pierce Transit (43%).

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 9:50 am

If ST leads on this issue, I bet the other agencies will follow. The county council could use the cover, given their several-year record of fear of fully embracing ORCA.

SEAN says
October 15, 2014 at 9:58 am

Curious – why is ORCA use on Pierce Transit much lower than it's pier agencies?

William Aitken says
October 15, 2014 at 10:05 am

I suspect it's a combination of factors. On average Pierce county is less well-off than King County, so riders there are more likely to view the $5.00 barrier to entry as significant. It's riders are probably also somewhat less technophilic. Perhaps there's a greater worry about being tracked.

Zach Shaner says
October 15, 2014 at 10:09 am

I'd guess it's more a demographic issue than an availability problem. Pierce County has a decent number of retail and agency ORCA outlets (Lakewood, South Tacoma, Tacoma Dome, 10th/Commerce, and 19 retail outlets), but their ridership is significantly poorer than ST's. Plus the cash fare is low ($2) and they still sell weekend flash passes for $4.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 10:16 am

At least until recently, Pierce Transit offered paper transfers.

Mike Orr says
October 15, 2014 at 10:54 am

How many riders know which retail stores have ORCA, or where those stores are?

MrZ says
October 19, 2014 at 12:04 am

PT still offers paper transfers, it wont be until December when the new fare structure goes into effect, eliminating paper transfers and going to a single ride/daypass system
http://www.piercetransit.org/proposed-fare-policy-change/

As I have said all long, you need to have a credit or debit card with a good line of credit to be able to tend to ORCA. if you are a cash passenger, or struggle to scrape up the funds to buy your pass it does not work very well. Not to mention that the places where you can load cash onto your ORCA card are still few and far in-between. Once ORCA machines get installed at every transit center, drugstore, and 7-11, etc. in the area It might be time to re-think that, but until than if you don't have a good line of credit ORCA is not for you.

William Aitken says
October 15, 2014 at 10:10 am

Why only a quarter? For one county trips in King County, I'd propose $3.25 (to match Metro) with Orca and $5.00 without: [Frankly, I'd really prefer a no Orca, no ride rule] but let's get there by really punishing cash fumblers. Use the extra revenue to replace lost revenue from

lowering the $5.00 cost of entry.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 10:19 am

I'd have no problem with a $5 cash fare. But when I lose my ORCA card, and I'm at a bus stop miles from the nearest ORCA vending machine, I'll be relieved that cash is still an option.

AlexKven says
October 15, 2014 at 7:06 pm

No ORCA, no ride is a great way to leave people stranded. I would prefer a "No ORCA, $20″ rule. That way, people will still never use cash, or at least never use it more than once.

AlexKven says
October 15, 2014 at 7:06 pm

And I suppose the $20 could be for both 1 and 2 zone fares.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 9:05 pm

How about giving the $20 payer an ORCA card, with $10 or so of e-purse (after counting the route just boarded)?

Glenn in Portland says
October 15, 2014 at 10:36 pm

That's sort of what Skagit Transit does, only they issue overpayment on a magnetic card that can be used for future trips. The balance on the card is printed on it each time it is run through the farebox.

Wes says
October 15, 2014 at 10:28 am

It's completely assinine. Let's just make car driving suburbanites pay their fair share and lower transit fares. Their transportation method and lifestyle is the most inefficient so stop subsidizing it.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 10:46 am

If it didn't threaten the financial viability of transit, I'd have no trouble with lower fares as well. But there still needs to be a differential between the faster method of paying when boarding the bus and the much slower method.

Mark Dublin says
October 15, 2014 at 10:51 am

Absolutely right, Eric. For any and all ORCA use, non-disclosure should be the default. Otherwise, the system should have to be the party to ask permission. Bet the Far Right would be with me on this one. Tempted to enlist Dori Monson, but Generva Conventions would send me to the Hague.

Would like an answer to Sam's question. Why ARE fares projected to fall off? Also, would personally ask not if increase is fair, but will it work? Part of answer could be question of mine: why can't ST Express passengers transfer free of charge between buses and LINK trains- of the same agency!?

And please nobody give me: "Well, they can just buy an ORCA card."
If you're new in town and in a hurry, no you can't, and shouldn't have to re: the ORCA charge part, the nuisance part, and the missed plane part.

In other words, Sam and everybody else: proof positive that company-paid-air-travel echelon ST management takes either cabs or cars to the airport. Make this group ride transit for these trips, and not only might fare projections increase, but travel expenses would be saved.

And some badly needed experience would become available to help solve problems like dropping ridership.

MD

The driver really didn't know, either re: route or re: time. I told the passenger just to follow me- I was headed south on LINK.

Mark Dublin says
October 15, 2014 at 12:25 pm

Sorry bad editing garbled personal experience example:

Inbound on the ST 512 just before 8. At 145th, young man boarded, asked the driver if the bus could get him to Greyhound before 8:40. Destination, Spokane. ST driver really didn't know.

Since I was headed south on LINK, I told the passenger just to follow me. Easiest inter-modal, inter-provider transfer in the world, literally.
512 to Westlake, cross sidewalk, stairs to mezzanine, stairway to platform LINK to Stadium. Passenger made his bus with probably 3 minutes to spare.

However, a couple little problems could have canceled the positive things above- especially making him miss his very-long-headway bus at night:

1. Even though ST Express and LINK carry same paint-job, passenger would've had to buy ticket for a very short train ride- with delay likely costing him a night on the street in Seattle.

2. Since I did know this, I would gladly have paid his fare on boarding LINK with him…like, where? If he'd been lucky, Fare Inspectors would have let him get off at Stadium to catch his bus. If I'd been lucky, the ticket I would have gladly taken would have spared me a very bad conscience.

Glad to do help and will do it again if needed- fare-evasion ticket and all. But fix is almost capital-free expense for ST:

1. Train ST drivers to know connection that easy and important connection. Especially now that Greyhound is no longer a cross-the-street stop from ST Express.

2. As long as LINK uses paper tickets, use same between buses and trains.

3. ORCA-only? Let both modes dispense one-ride intermodal card for price of one regional fare.

4. Issue transit information packets to all out-of-town carriers, from airlines to Greyhound, to accompany every Seattle-bound ticket.

In other words, in the words I hate most applied to public service:

RUN IT LIKE A BUSINESS!!!!!!!!!

MrZ says
October 19, 2014 at 12:15 am

While I hate the thought of regional umbrella groups, and adding another layer of governmental management to our transit systems, I really think the agencies in the Puget sound area (Everett, Community, King, Pierce, Intercity, Kitsap, and Sound Transit) need to fall under an umbrella group, like PSRC with more powers and purse strings, and they can take over regional things like ORCA, One Bus Away, etc. As part of that, I think a de-facto increase in the local option transit sales tax to .9 with the PSRC disbursing funds to the agencies for various routes and services. in theory then, Pierce Transit's route 402, 500, 501, etc could be prorated with each county paying for that level of service inside the their own county. Plus also with an arrangement like that cross border services would be more equitable, and hopefully better planning and integration amongst all of the agencies could happen. As a side, i'd also like to see better management and use of P&R capacity which I think needs a more regional approach and shared management (no more his vs. hers facilities)

AlexKven says
October 15, 2014 at 7:03 pm

I don't know how good of a comparison it is to compare Sound Transit express fares to Community Transit express fares. You pretty much have to take out a second mortgage to get a pass that covers CT express fares. To give you an idea, the adult fare for the N/E commuter trips is the same as the fare for taking the Sounder from Lakewood to Seattle.

And, being a millennial, I cannot imagine being on an airplane with people smoking. Good move, Northwest. My, how the culture has changed.

Brent says
October 15, 2014 at 9:03 pm

I'm not advocating that fares be high, just that cash fares be higher than ORCA fares.

My point with the Community Transit example is that ST Express routes making the same trips as CT commuter routes will still charge less than the CT routes under staff's recommendation.

smp belltown says
October 15, 2014 at 10:18 pm

Out of curiosity, does anyone know what the latest stats are for ORCA card group/corporate purchases vs. ORCA card individual card purchases? (In other words, how many ORCAs are paid for by the Acme widget companies of the world on behalf of their employees, and how many of the cards are bought individually by single transit users.)

Glenn in Portland says
October 15, 2014 at 10:43 pm

At least their raising the fares $0.25.

Talk about cash fumbling…..I take it not too many people on here visited Portland and took TriMet buses during the era of the $1.15 or $1.65 or $1.85 fares?

Corrie Adams says
October 16, 2014 at 4:05 pm

Ill try to make it!

Nathanael says
October 17, 2014 at 12:05 pm

Can anyone explain why Seattle is still following Industry Worst Practice by charging $5 for an ORCA card? (Best Practice is to charge a $1 refundable deposit, refunded upon surrender of the card.)

Brent says
October 17, 2014 at 11:45 pm

Where is that being done?

MrZ says
October 19, 2014 at 12:16 am

LA was $2 or $3 for the TAP card which seemed reasonable to me.

— END —

Attachment G: Public Hearing Transcript

P R O C E E D I N G S

SOUND TRANSIT FARE CHANGE PROPOSAL

PUBLIC HEARING

OCTOBER 23, 2014

Sound Transit

401 South Jackson Street

Seattle, Washington 98104

Taken Before:

Kandi Clark, CCR #3008

of

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BUTLER: Good afternoon. It is now 12:00 or a little after 12:00 actually. I declare this public hearing open.

My name is Fred Butler. I'm on the Sound Transit Board and will be presiding this afternoon.

Today's public hearing is being held to receive comment on Sound Transit's proposal to implement a low income fare program and a general fare increase.

Following a presentation from staff, we will take testimony from individuals in the order in which they signed up to speak. If you are planning to speak and have not yet signed up, please do so and hand your slip to our board administration staff, who is raising his hand right now. Thank you, Brian.

The comments today will become part of the formal record and the board will consider them as part of the decision-making process on implementing a potential fare increase -- change.

At this time, I'd like to call on Brian Brooke, research policy and business development manager, who will provide a staff presentation on this issue.

Brian welcome. Thank you.

(Off the record presentation provided by

Brian Brooke.)

MR. BUTLER: And, I believe, that concludes your report.

MR. BROOKE: And that concludes my report.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Brian.

We'll now take testimony from members of the audience. If you are planning to speak and have not signed up, please raise your hand now so that we can get you a sign-in sheet.

Each person will have three minutes to speak.

I ask that you be respectful of this time limit so that we may allow everyone who wishes the opportunity to speak and ask that we exercise courtesy to everyone here.

We're using a timer this afternoon that shows a steady green light when you begin speaking. When you have one minute remaining, the green light will begin flashing. When the amber light comes on, you'll have 30 seconds to complete your testimony. When the red light comes on, you'll hear a short beep meaning your time is up.

I will now call on the public to provide comments, and will ask one last time is there anyone here who is desiring to speak and has not yet signed up? If so, please raise your hand. And we will get a sign-up sheet to you.

So I saw two hands raised. And with that, we will begin public comment.

First person signed up to speak is Mr. Paul W. Locke.

MR. LOCKE: I'm Paul W. Locke. The only changes you should be making in the fares is to raise them high enough to cover your operating costs. The only other change will be that you comply with the federal rules in that; that you have to comply with, since you're receiving federal funds; and that's the only change you should be making.

The operation of this system, since it gets federal funds, has to lose money. I think we should be dropping the requirement by the board to get federal funding. $18 trillion under current administration to Washington of additional money put into circulation. The people that are going to be around to pay these bills won't make it. Seattle couldn't cover their speed car to Lake Union, so the city council, and this was reconsidered to extend the loan. You've got to change course.

Three years of expenditures 10,000 -- 2010 to 2013 is the amount of money that I've paid to the federal government for taxes from 2013 and the estimate for 2014 already. People that are living off the investments are really being hit. We're hit hard because we get large

lump sums in payments. So we end up paying the maximum rates on income tax. Thank you for your time.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

The next person signed up to speak is Mr. Walt Hurd, and he will be followed by Katie Wilson.

Mr. Hurd.

MR. HURD: I'm Mr. Hurd, Walt Hurd. And I live in Tacoma. And I travel quite frequently to Seattle, about two or three times a week and -- which the bus happens to stop. I was going to take the light rail. And I said, "Well, the bus stops right here." And a friend of mine takes him -- he always gets caught in traffic. And I -- to make a long story short, but, I think, as long as the -- as far as the fares are -- I know that your costs do go up. And sometimes I haven't had change, and I've had to just go ahead and put a dollar in the fare box, you know, and possibly just keep the fare and .25 cents -- you know, when you increase it in .25 cent increments. And I was encountered with a youth fares. I was riding the No. 8 bus on Martin Luther King Junior Way that I had time to get to. I teach chess on Mondays and Saturdays is two of the things and other times, you know, to shop or whatever.

And making this other story short, I did talk with a fare enforcement officer on light rail and mentioned the

fact about these people got on at Martin Luther King Junior Way, which I did bring this up to King County and brought it up here, as well, to -- 12 people -- the driver claimed that 12 people got on the bus and didn't pay their fare. So I just -- at any rate I just -- you know, I think that it should be -- poor people should be able to afford the fare; however, you know, not stiff people out. I think buying -- I think the elimination of transfers would be a good -- is a good deal -- in having the people buy a day pass on Sound Transit is the best way. There's no question about it. Your fare -- you just put your card in. And you know, no squabble about it. You know, that's your fare. You buy your card or -- and I just told the driver don't bring the kids on the next -- you know, don't let them on the next time if those 12 didn't pay the fare. And -- so anyhow take care.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

Next is Katie Wilson followed by Shefali Ranganathan.

MS. WILSON: Hi there. My name is Katie Wilson. And I'm here representing the Transit Riders Union. Thank you for hearing our public comment.

I'm just going to read a statement that we approved at our last membership meeting.

The Transit Riders Union is pleased that Sound Transit is considering a lower fare for low income

riders. This will make public transit more affordable for thousands of riders. We support a low income fare on all Sound Transit services. However, we do not believe that this program should be paid for by raising fares for other riders. An across the board fare increase will create a hardship for low income seniors, youth, and riders with disabilities, and as well as driving many choice riders back to their cars. Public Transit does not only benefit those who ride, it benefits everyone.

Public transit helps to create a healthy urban economy and eases traffic congestion by removing cars from our roads. It lessens our dependence on fossil fuels and reduces greenhouse gases, the leading cause of global warming and climate change.

For the sake of future generations, we should be doing everything in our power to invest in and encourage the use of public transit, including keeping fares as low as possible for everyone.

For all of these reasons, the Transit Riders Union opposes a fare increase. With voter approval Sound Transit has the power to assess an employer tax of $2 per employee per month, which would more than cover the cost of the low income fare.

Transit riders already fund Sound Transit through sales tax and fares. We believe the business community,

which derives benefits from public transit, should contribute, as well.

So in summary, we strongly support a low income fare on all Sound Transit services. And we believe that Sound Transit should consider other options before resorting to an across the board fare increase. Thank you.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you. Our next Shefali Ranganathan followed by Rebecca Roy.

And if I did not pronounce either one of your names correctly, my apologies.

MS. RANGANATHAN: My name is Shefali Ranganathan. And I am here representing Transportation Choices Coalition. Thanks for the opportunity to provide comment here on Sound Transit's fare proposal. We are very pleased to see that Sound Transit is considering implementing a low income fare that will make transit more accessible to thousands of riders as the Transit Union -- Riders Union said. We are very supportive of you adopting a low income fare. And we hope that you will do it in conjunction with King County Metro in March of 2015.

In terms of more specifics, we believe that in the long term, Option 4, which covers the entire Sound Transit district, is the best option to make transit more affordable. But we do recognize the implementation challenges of doing a program of that scale that -- this

quickly. So we would urge you to consider a phased approach. And so, also adopt a time line with which you have a plan to roll out a low income fare to the entire King County region.

In the near term, we urge you to adopt Option 3, which is, you know, a low income fare on both Express bus service and Link light rail in the King County region. King County is going to have a low income fare. And it does not serve riders who have a confusing and inconsistent fare policy. In the -- and finally a program of this scale will require significant outreach and innovative marketing and easy access. And to realize the promise of this fare policy, we urge you to work with Metro in whatever way you can to make sure that the most people have access to this policy and to this fare. Thanks again for your time. And we look forward to working with Sound Transit.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you. Rebecca Roy followed by Mr. Will Kneduk.

MS. ROY: Good afternoon. My name is Rebecca Roy. And I'm the Community Projects Manager at the Seattle, King County Coalition on Homelessness. The coalition is a county ride alliance of more than 60 direct service and housing providers serving people who are homeless and low income. The direct knowledge and

experience informs the coalition's perspective and priorities.

To begin I thank you for this opportunity to comment on Sound Transit's low income fare proposal. As many of you know the coalition and its members are ardent supporters of strong public transit system that serves all members of the public. That's why we're so heavily involved in mitigating the loss of downtown Seattle's ride free area with the solid ground circulator. And that's where we begin organizing for a low income Metro fare back in 2012. And that's also why we pushed hard for King County's Proposition 1 to save Metro service back in April and are doing the same for city -- the city of Seattle Proposition 1 to save and expand Metro service for this current election. As a reminder to those of you in the room every day up until November 4th is election day. So vote and vote for Reid.

Throughout our members and supporters write, call, e-mail, turn out to public meetings to move our region to the forefront of public policy that enhance transit's other social and economic goals.

It should be no surprise that this is why I'm here today. In every conversation I have with our members, there's strong enthusiasm and support for this low income fare. They know it is not theory that public transit is a

life line. It is a reality. On behalf of our member organizations and all the people they serve, I'm here today to show our strong support of Sound Transit adopting a low income fare similar to King County Metro and implementing this fare in conjunction with Metro's efforts. This is the most positive change that Sound Transit can make. And we applaud you for working to take this huge leap forward. We specifically support Option 4 and 3 and oppose Option 1. We urge you, Sound Transit, to commit resources to Metro's efforts to publicize and implement the low income fare and to ensure that eligible riders find it easy to use. Thank you for your leadership on this extremely important public policy issue.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

Mr. Will Kneduk followed Rebecca Saldana.

MR. KNEDUK: My name is Will Kneduk. I'm here today on behalf of the East Side Transit Riders United. And this is one of the rare occasions when I need to disagree with my friend, Paul W. Locke.

East Side Transit Riders United strongly supports the low income fare. But we do not think that the proposals that are being considered are nearly strong enough. The low income fare for the truly low income should start no higher than the low income fare that you provide for the imputed poor; namely, senior citizens and handicapped,

many of whom are not low income at all. And as a group, many of whom have much higher standards of living than the working poor. There is absolutely no reason for you to institute a fare for the truly needy, that charges them more money for a life line service than you provide for senior citizens and handicapped, who as I say in some cases are truly needy. But in many cases are not truly needy at all.

Now, having said that, there is another reason operationally for you to, in fact, impose a fare for the truly needy that is no higher than senior citizens and handicapped in order to save money in your operations. The ORCA card operation, which is administered by this agency has received a report by its high priced expert consultant indicating that the reason your ORCA card is so expensive to operate and is so outrageously expensive in comparison to other card systems is because of the multiplicity of fares and the lack of coordination among the fares. You, in fact, can save money by not creating additional fare structures. And you should be looking to do something about this drag on the operations of this agency. In fact, the Citizens Oversight Panel recently asked a reasonable question: What percentage of total revenues taken in by this agency are eaten up by ORCA? Your administrator could not answer the question because

you've never bothered to look. But what we know for sure is that adding additional categories of fares adds to that outrageous expense.

Finally, we agree with the Transit Riders Union. We're not quite as socialist as they are, but we do agree with them that the idea of you imposing a head tax on employers is a good idea. And you should be doing that rather than running down to the legislature and trying another predatory rate on taxpayers who pay the sales tax as you apparently intend to do in the next legislative session.

Thank you so much.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you. Rebecca Saldana followed by Viki Shaw (sic), I believe.

MS. SALDANA: Good afternoon. My name is Rebecca Saldana. I'm the deputy director of Puget Sound Sage. And we're a coalition of faith, labor, and community organizations throughout the Puget Sound; that includes and represents lower income students, residents, and service and hospitality workers and their families. We bring research policy analysis coalition building to make sure we have policies that support communities where all our families can thrive. And because of that, we are here to support your efforts to consider adopting a low income fare. And we think that it would be most strategic as

looking at Option 3 and supporting Option 4 as we phase into that. And that the best use of our resources and dollars is to take the investment, because we were part of a community group that helps advocate and support the low income fare Metro; that it makes most sense for you to pull resources and look at how you can invest in a shared marketing strategy and education effort that speaks to the full ridership. We organize along with your current light rail and between the international district, where we are here today, and out to Tukwila and SeaTac.

And the communities we work with with the south region organizing for racial regional equity includes 19 immigrant refugee and people of color led service agencies and organizations. And we would love to partner with you in thinking about the best way to engage the broader community both in education and implementation and design of this program. And we will be joining on a sign-on letter and sending that to you later today for the many of the organizations that weren't able to be here during this date and time. So thank you so much for your time.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

The last person that I have who has signed up to speak is Viki Shaw.

MS. SNOW: My name is Viki Snow. But I'm from Tacoma. And I have not read the strategies that you have

outlined. But I would like to say that as a low income person, who's trying to get back on her feet, and is a person who uses the system, and I'm grateful for the benefits that I have received. I just want to say on behalf of those like myself who may not look like they're ill, who do have struggles that they're dealing with, that they do need these options available to them to be able to travel to have a motivation to enjoy life. And if you don't have the money to do that, then it's very difficult to want to live. And I know that everyone across the board needs to be looked at. And I think that we should just try and work it out fairly for all involved -- like I said, if I could read the strategies, I could elaborate more on how I feel. But I'd like to say that I think you should try to maintain the low fare income as low as possible.

Thank you.

MR. BUTLER: Ms. Snow, thank you very, very much.

Is there anyone else desiring to speak who has not signed up?

There are several. And a sign up sheet is making its way to you. There are two in the back. Or you have a sign-up sheet, sir. If you would come forward, please.

MS. SMITH: Good afternoon. My name is Samuel

Smith. And I am a member of the Transit Riders Union, as well. I just wanted to applaud your efforts to implement a low income fare, at least to look into it. If you do, in fact, implement it as -- in addition to what Metro Transit is doing, I believe it would be a fairly unprecedented service offered to low income people for a large metropolitan region in North America. So, I think, that's an incredibly courageous effort and statement to make towards -- for anybody who is poor and trying to make it in this region.

And I agree with most of what the last several speakers have said about what ways to implement it. And I obviously, I think, the lower the fare all across the board, the better. And I understand that there are some -- possibly some harsh realities that make that harder to deal with. In an ideal world, there would not be any fare.

I also wanted to repeat what Katie from the Transit Riders Union had said about wishing that this implementing the low income fare did not have to come off of the backs of other transit riders but I think that increasing their fares just anecdotally a lot of -- I am fortunate enough to have an employer pay for transit pass. So I don't even -- I never have to think twice about being able to pay to ride a transit. I'll take it everywhere. It's

like three blocks or 20 miles, whatever. However -- wherever I need to go, I'll take it without even thinking about it. Friends of mine who are very poor, very comfortable all across the income spectrum. I have people who told me that they would like to take the bus but don't think that they can -- don't think economically it makes sense for the trip they're trying to take because they would rather walk a long distance just to save money or even -- or drive a car because in their mind it's cheaper. So for those reasons, I would love to see a -- a low of a fare as possible for people who are struggling, living in poverty, or even people that own cars and are maybe slightly above that 200 percent federal poverty line who are making it but still struggling. I think it's all I have to say.

So thank you very much.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Smith.

The next person is Justin Kerwin followed by Mr. or Mrs. Berk.

MR. KERWIN: Okay. I'm Justin Kerwin. And I live in Seattle. And I'm on SSDI. So I'm low income. And I finally moved from a real expensive apartment. And I'm trying to save money. And now with, you know, fare increases, it makes it that much harder to save money.

And I went to the dentist the other day. And my

transfer expired before I got out. And so, I had to pay for another bus fare. And I think if you need to raise tax, you should tax the drivers. That I think the more you tax the drivers, the less they're going to want to come down here; and the less they're going to want to drive downtown. And, you know, have a lower tax on car pools. But I still think that it's the drivers that should be taxed to raise more money because it's beneficial to them if there's less people on the road. Because some of the people who are riding the buses shouldn't be driving a car, including me. Thank you.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you. The last person I have signed up to speak is Ms. Berk.

I can't wait to find out what your first name is. It was hard to read.

MS. BERK: Yeah, I apologize that I didn't write clearly. My name is Celia Berk. I'm an organizer with Youth Undoing Institutional Racism and Ending the Prison Industrial Complex. I just found out about this hearing on the train the other day through a poster. And one of the things I'd like to say is particularly when you guys have hearings like this, you need to do outreach. And the timing of this meeting, also, was very inconvenient for many of the people who are going to be most affected by the decisions that you make. So what I want to say is

thank you for considering the low income fare. I think that's really important. And if you are going to do that, it is even more important -- it is essential that you ask the community, and that you talk to the community and bridge the gap there. Many times politicians and officials and corporations don't do that out of fear or confusion, but that connection needs to be there, particularly with Sound Transit, as I've seen the light rail change the neighborhood that I've lived in my whole life very drastically in the past couple years, the south end of Seattle.

So you need to ask the community especially about things that will impact them the most. Like I said, I don't see very many people here who are here to vouch for that but just as long as you know that that exists and that that should be considered. So thank you for the low income fare. I hope that you will choose to pass it without bumping up the other fares because I think that would really negatively impact a lot of people who don't fit one way or the other. They sort of fall into the limbo in between. But whatever you do, I hope it will involve the community. We're always here. And we're always ready to communicate. So....

MR. BUTLER: Thank you.

That's the last person I have who has signed up to

speak.

Is there anyone else in the audience who would like to speak who has not had an opportunity? Anyone else desiring to speak? Third and final call, anyone else desiring to speak this afternoon?

(No response.)

MR. BUTLER: Seeing no one, I will declare this public hearing closed at 12:34.

(The proceedings conclude at 12:34 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, KANDI CLARK, a duly authorized Court Reporter in and for the State of Washington, residing at Tacoma, authorized to administer oaths and affirmations pursuant to RCW 5.28.010, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing hearing transcribed by me by means of computer-aided transcription is a full, true, and complete transcript of the proceedings;

That I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any party to this action or relative or employee of any such attorney or counsel, and I am not financially interested in the said action or the outcome thereof;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of November, 2014.

Kandi Kathryn Clark
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